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THE GREATEST STORY IN THE
WORLD, PERIOD I
NATURE'S MOODS AND TENSES
WHEN LIFE WAS NEW
THE FORTNIGHTLY CLUB

EDITED BY

THE PRIVATE DIARIES OF THE
RT. HON. SIR A. WEST
WARRIORS AND STATESMEN
From the Literary Gleanings of the late
EARL BRASSEY

**THE GREATEST STORY
IN THE WORLD**

PERIOD II

**The Further Story of the Old World up to the Discovery
of the New**

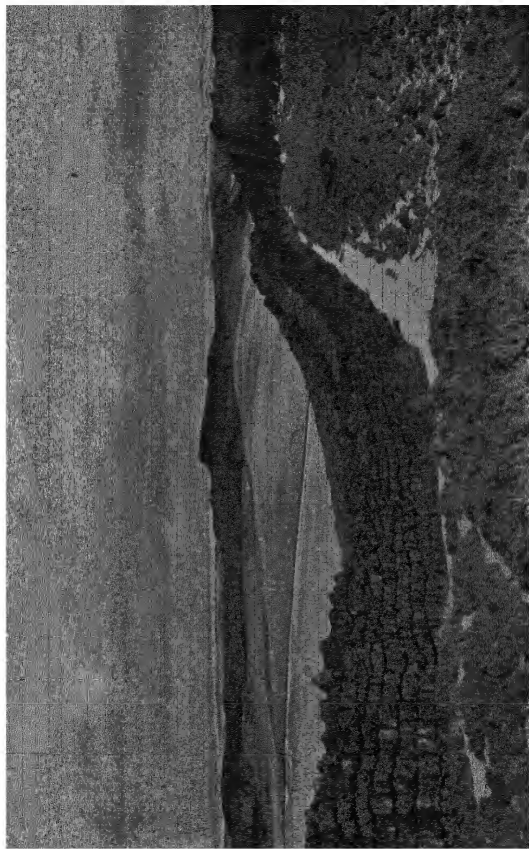


Photo by E. E. Oldershaw, Esq.

**HADRIAN'S WALL AT THE PRESENT DAY, LOOKING EAST FROM HOTBANK CRAGS,
BARDON MILL, NORTHUMBERLAND.**

[Frontispiece]

THE GREATEST STORY IN THE WORLD

PERIOD II

The Further Story of the Old World up to the
Discovery of the New

BY HORACE G. HUTCHINSON

LONDON

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PREFACE TO PERIOD II

I HAVE taken up our "Greatest Story" from the point at which we dropped it at the end of the first volume ; that is about the year A.D. 100, when the Roman Empire was a solidly established institution.

Throughout that first volume our own land of Britain scarcely had a place. In the latter part of the period--A.D. 100 to A.D. 1500--which this second volume covers, men of Britain played a great rôle. For centuries, kings of England were rulers of large domains on the Continent of Europe also, and at one time their Continental territories were more extensive and richer than their insular possessions. The world story thus becomes, in some measure, England's also. Moreover, when there have seemed to be two or more ways open for the telling of the story, I have always tried to adopt what I may call the English way, the way which seemed likely to bring it most warmly and intimately home to English hearts and minds. Thus, for example, when the course of history brought us to the point at which we were to consider the manner of life of those Gothic or Germanic tribes which came flooding in from the eastern side of the Rhine, I have chosen, for a type of their lives in general, what we partly know and partly surmise of those lives as they were lived in our own island. Again, where I have endeavoured to give an idea of the manner in which the Northmen, the sea-rovers, made their settlements, I have taken their incursions on England as a type

of the rest. In both instances it would have been equally possible to tell the story of some of the people of Charlemagne's great empire and the Continental settlements of the Northmen as typical examples, but the other appeared to me the way far more likely to make the picture real and the story appealing to the eye of an Anglo-Saxon reader.

The period is one of dissolution, in the first place, as the Roman Empire broke to pieces under its own dissensions and the inroads of the barbarians. The break-up was followed by a certain reconstruction under the later empire of Charlemagne. But this again was followed by a second dissolution, less complete than the former. The feudal system then plays its temporary part as a means of holding society together in some sort of cohesion. And finally we see the kings asserting the central authority in their kingdoms more and more at the cost of the local authority of the feudal lords.

Throughout these centuries of successive change there is one power which works all the while to prevent humanity from falling back into a state of barbarism and complete lawlessness—the power of the Church exercised through the person of the Pope and of his officials who covered Christendom. The Crusades, with all that they brought of good and ill, are an episode in the story's course.

By the end of the period the Moor has finally been expelled from the south-western corner of the scene, but the Turk has established himself largely on its eastern side.

The year A.D. 1500 brings the story down to the dawn of a new day, when the darkness of the Middle Ages shall be dispelled by the light which is spreading out from Italy to illuminate Europe. We are at the point when the new story of America in the West and the very ancient stories of India and China in the

East are just about to be brought in and woven up with our own story. But they have not been brought in yet.

In this second volume I have followed the plan adopted for the first—avoiding, as far as possible, names and dates that are not of the highest importance, for the sake of simplification and in order to give their true value to those which are the most important. Only the large outlines are laid down, so that the reader may know, when he comes to the study of any one particular section of history, the place which that section occupies in relation to the whole.

I have again aimed at telling the narrative in very simple language; but in this second volume I have tried to adapt it for scholars perhaps a year or so older than those for whom the first was specially written. I have made this slight difference presuming that the scholar was likely to read the earlier part of the story first and then to pass on to this latter.

And once more, as in the Preface to Period I, I have to thank Mr. R. B. Lattimer for much valuable correction and advice.

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THE GREATEST STORY IN THE WORLD

CHAPTER I

BRITAIN

IN the first volume of this *Greatest Story in the World* we saw how man lived upon the earth from the earliest times at which we know anything about him. We followed the story down to about the year A.D. 100 when the different threads of the story came together into one hand—the mighty hand of Rome and of the firmly established Roman Empire. The whole world, or what the people of that time regarded as the whole of the world that mattered, was controlled by the Roman hand. This second volume will be mainly the story of what happened when the grasp of that hand weakened, and allowed the threads to fall apart again.

Rome had driven its fine roads, which you may imagine going out, from the imperial city as their centre, like the spokes of a great wheel, to the farthest ends of the Empire. And you should notice a peculiarity about those spokes—those roads—that they always went straight. It did not matter how high a hill they came to, nor how deep a valley—

unless the hill or the vale side were impossibly steep, the road never turned. It did not go round the hill : it went over the top of it and down the other side.

I suggest to you that you should take notice of this straight going of the roads, partly because the fact of their straightness is interesting in itself and also because it is so like the way in which the Romans, who made those roads, acted in all their doings. They went straight ahead and would not be turned aside or stopped by any obstacles. Their roads, of which we are still able to trace portions, are signs of their character as a nation.

Posting along these roads they had a fine system of mounted messengers, one messenger, at a post say twenty miles out of Rome, taking up, with a fresh horse, the message which another had brought out from the city, and so on—perhaps as far as Byzantium (the name of Constantinople had not yet been thought of) eastward, as far as the coasts of Gaul, from which men could look across to the cliffs of Britain, northward. They were roads along which armies would march, trade would be carried, government officials, with all their train of slaves and servants, would go to their appointed places in the provinces, carrying with them Roman ideas of discipline and obedience, Greek arts and thought and, possibly, and more and more as time went on, the new religion of Christianity.

At the northern cliffs of what we now call France the road would come to an end—of necessity, because there the sea began. But, once across the narrow sea which we call the Channel, the road building would begin again, if the Romans were intending to make any long stay in the country. The first time that the Roman legions came they were led by Julius Cæsar about 50 years B.C. Probably that wise general and statesman did not think that the cost of making Britain a part of the Roman Empire was worth paying, at

that time. His legions had plenty to do in keeping the tribes of Gaul in order. He established no Roman authority in Britain, but sailed back to the Continent, and the Romans seem to have paid no attention whatever to Britain for nearly a hundred years.

And on this second occasion of their coming there is no doubt that they came intending to stay. It was about A.D. 50, or a little sooner, that Claudius, the emperor, himself with the legions, appeared in Britain and easily made himself master of most of the southern and all the south-eastern part of the island.

We must try to get a picture in our minds of the state of Britain at that time, and realise how the people lived and what kind of people they were.

Perhaps the first thing to realise about them is that they were not English at all. This name English, if it was used in those days at all, was the name of a tribe that lived across the North Sea on what we now call Sleswig. North of them lived a tribe called the Jutes, on that Jutland from which the great sea-fight takes its name, and south of them a tribe called Saxons. All were of the same race, originally, and all came conquering to Britain—but not just yet.

When Julius Cæsar, and also when Claudius, nearly a century later, came to Britain it was inhabited by a people from whom it had its name, the Brythons. It is believed that they were not the original inhabitants of the island, but that they had come from some part of that great nursery of the human family, the east of Germany and Poland and the west and south of Russia. There had been at least two great westward migrations of an ancient race called Celts from that nursery, before the time of the Romans coming to Britain. All over the western world and as far south as Byzantium itself these Celts penetrated, and, coming from the east, it is noticeable that they maintained themselves against later invaders most strongly in

the farthest west—in Spain, in Brittany, in Cornwall, Wales, Ireland and the West of Scotland.

The earlier immigration of Celts into Britain had taken place in what is called the Bronze Age, when man had learnt to make weapons and tools and ornaments of bronze, but had not yet learnt the use of iron. These Bronze Age Celts were called Goidels. But the people after whom the island was named, the Brythons, came in the Iron Age; and it was them that Cæsar and all the later-coming Romans found in possession.

So much has been written about the ancient Britons dyeing themselves blue with “woad” and so on that we are inclined to regard them as far more rude and savage than they were. They seem to have lived in huts made of stone and turf and partly excavated in the ground and to have been hunters, and, in a very simple way, farmers. Some of their houses were built on oak piles driven into the soft ground of the marshes. They lived in small communities, or tribes, often fighting against each other, and with a head-man over each tribe. But besides these communities scattered over the country, there had already been established towns where markets, for buying and selling, were held. This, at all events, would be a tolerably correct picture of the south and east of Britain, where there was a close connection, across the narrow Channel, with Gaul and the Roman influences. Cæsar’s Romans found the Brythons buying and selling with gold coins and iron bars serving them for money.

I say that this is a tolerably true picture of the south and east, particularly because it is in those parts that an invader, whether he came for peaceful trading or for warlike aggression, would find it the most easy to establish himself. If we look for a moment at the geography of our country we shall see that this must have been so.

For one thing, they are the parts which lie nearest to Gaul and the rest of the Continent from which the invader would be likely to come. And then you will see that the south and east, say as far north as the Humber and as far west as the Severn, are, in spite of certain high ridges of downs and hills, by far the more level, generally, and less broken. They were easier to traverse. We have to imagine all the country far more densely wooded than it is now, and all the river valleys far more marshy. In consequence of the marshy softness of the lower ground, we find that the old tracks generally went along the uplands, wherever that was possible.

Colchester, in Essex, was the chief city of Britain when the first serious Roman invasion came, and under Claudius the legions crossed the Thames, took Colchester and mastered all the south-east of Britain. Wherever the Romans came, it was their custom to make military roads if they had any intention of settling in the country. Julius Cæsar's expedition we have to regard as little more than one of discovery—to see what the island was like, and whether its products would pay the Empire for the cost of conquest. His decision must have been that it was worth the cost, because we know that several of the emperors had designs for making the conquest, but, busy as they were elsewhere, nothing was done to achieve it until Claudius came to the throne in Rome.

The produce that the Romans found, which induced them to think that the island was worth conquering, was chiefly mineral; tin, lead and iron, with a little gold; and later Britain grew corn for the Empire.

The Brythons seem to have been stubborn fighters. They had horses and chariots, with blades, like scythes, sticking out from the sides of the chariots. But it seems that they had little discipline and little idea of forming themselves into any order when they went

into battle. They could have had no real chance against the experience and skill, to say nothing of the better arms, of the Roman soldiers.

So, after the establishment of the Roman authority in the south, the penetration of the island by the legions went on. They penetrated as far north as Cromarty, and as far west as Anglesey, but they never really subdued either the far north, where the people called Picts then lived, or the broken and hilly countries in the west, which the Celtic Brythons still occupied. Under one of the generals, Agricola, whose campaigns are described by the Roman historian, Tacitus, we find that a line of forts was established across the narrowest part of Scotland, from the Clyde to the Forth. But under the Emperor Hadrian, who reigned from 117 to 138, the great effort of the Empire was to establish certain limits, or boundaries, which it would be able to hold against all attacks from beyond those boundaries. During his reign the Empire gave up some of its conquered territory in Asia. Hadrian erected a line of palisades, or strong wooden walls, along the boundary line of the Empire between the Rhine and the Danube, and in Britain he threw up a wall, a long way south of the Clyde and Forth, from the Solway to the mouth of the Tyne. Evidently, however, this obstacle was not effective in keeping out the Pict, for twenty years later we find his successor, Antoninus Pius, building a second wall from Forth to Clyde, for the better security of the frontier.

CHAPTER II

THE CAMPS OF THE LEGIONS

It never was any part of the Empire's plan to drive out the native people from lands that it subdued. What it wanted of these people was that they should stay where they were and follow their own customs and provide the necessities and the luxuries of life for their conquerors. The Romans were what we should call a very practical nation. Roman laws, of course, had to prevail in the lands so conquered, but otherwise it does not seem that there was much upsetting of the national habits of the people. But the influence of the conquerors, their way of thought, their discipline and so on, of course worked among the conquered, and the natives of the provinces so became Romanised, as it is called.

In order to understand and to follow the course of this greatest of all stories we ought to try to form a picture in our minds of the world at this time, say from A.D. 100 to 200.

There is the Roman Empire ; and that is all the world that seemed to matter to those who were the great actors in the story at that time. We have to regard that Empire as shut in, walled off. The sea, from the mouth of the Rhine to the coast of Africa, is the boundary north and west. There is a strip of Empire in Africa reaching to Egypt, between the Mediterranean Sea and the Sahara desert, and all that strip is protected by a line of forts against incursions

from any Ethiopians from the desert. There is Egypt itself. Then there is so much of Asia Minor as from time to time was held as Roman. It included Syria, at all events, but the boundary here was more often changed perhaps than elsewhere, though it did not in many parts remain quite fixed. So we come up to the Black Sea, and to the mouth of the Danube. The Danube, during most of the time that the Empire lasted, formed a boundary line, though the province of Dacia was for a while held beyond it. And we know that there were palisades—a wooden wall—drawn along from the Danube to the Rhine.

That completes the enclosure, with Britain lying apart like a kind of crumb, crumbled off the big loaf.

Thus there is this great Empire, fenced within walls and other limits, such as the limits that the sea makes; and at certain places outside the wall there are people looking over—outsiders, whom the Romans called “barbarians,” men who said “bar bar,” that is to say, who were unintelligible, when they tried to talk. The Brythons themselves were barbarians, of course, to the Romans. So were the Gauls, whom Julius Cæsar conquered in the land that is now France. So were the Iberians, who were the people that the Romans found in Spain. Thus there were many barbarians within the boundaries, as well as outside. But as time went on these natives of the different regions within the Empire became “Romanised.” Roman modes of law and of the governing of cities made their way all over the Empire. What we should call “municipal life,” that is to say the management of towns by “municipal” authorities, like our mayors and councillors, came into fashion. The natives became more like their Roman conquerors in their thoughts and in their ways of life. Natives and Romans made marriages, and the children of these marriages hardly would know what to call themselves

—whether Romans or Gauls. In the early days of Rome, when it was a Republic, the privileges of a Roman citizen were very important. The "citizen" alone had the right to a vote for the election of the officials by whom he and the whole Republic and its dependencies were to be governed. But this right of voting was given more and more freely as the years went on and as other parts of the Empire increased in importance. To all the free men—all who were not slaves—of certain states that had loyally helped Rome when she was hard pressed by her enemies, the right was given first; then to all Italian free men; and soon it was extended widely through the Empire. We notice how St. Paul, at Cæsarea, claimed his right, as a free man of the Empire, to make appeal to the Emperor himself at Rome, and how that right could not be disallowed.

Now one of the rights that "citizenship" had carried with it in the early days was the right, and the duty, of being called up for military service in defence of the Empire and to fight its foes. The "legion" about which we hear so much in this great story, first came into existence in this way. It was a collection (the word "legion" itself is a form of the last two syllables of col-"lection") of the citizens to fight for their city.

As the Republic grew and began to take possession of more and more lands far away from its centre, there was need of armies of quite a different kind from this. The citizens of the first legion went on military service, when called upon; but they looked forward to going back to their farms, or whatever their business was, as soon as the fighting was over. The increasing power of the Republic and the increase of the territory and peoples over which it ruled, made it necessary that the government at Rome should have an army, or several armies, ready to take the field when required.

And thus a Roman "standing army," as we should call it, came into existence; its soldiers were men who had no other business than soldiery; the military life was their profession, by which they earned their livelihood.

But the name of legion was still used, although it was used for something very different from that to which the name had been given at first. It grew to be used for what we might call "a division," of an army. The number of soldiers in a legion differed slightly from time to time, but for the most part it was about 6,000, nearly all foot-soldiers. They were heavily armed, with heavy throwing spears, short, double-edged swords and long thrusting spears. Their general way of battle was to discharge the throwing spears in a volley and then to charge in and destroy the enemy, already sorely vexed by the heavy javelins, with the short swords.

The legions, as we have seen already, might be moved hither and thither to any point of the great Empire where their services were needed. While the Empire was being created, and the nations were being subdued, there was frequent occasion for this movement of large bodies of troops; but you must realise that we have now come to a point in the story at which the Empire—especially under the wise Emperor Hadrian—is concerned more with making good the conquests it has already won, than in adding to them. The boundaries, the limits, have been set, as we have just been tracing them—or somewhat like that. The Romans are within the boundaries; the barbarians are without. And wherever the barbarians are there is need of one or other of the legions, acting as a kind of police, to see that no one breaks through the wall.

The result of that is that the legions are not required to move about so much as they were when the Empire

was being won. Now that it is won, they are set here and there, like watch dogs, along the boundaries. The positions which they occupy become permanent camps. The legionaries are allowed to marry and to live outside the actual confines of the camp.

I think this then may give us some general idea of the picture that we should carry in our minds of the Roman Empire—which is almost as much as to say, of the world—at this point in the story, about A.D. 200. There are in all twenty-five legions. In Britain itself there were three, one at Chester, one at York, one at Caerleon. Now the number of troops in a legion was commonly, as we have seen, 6,000, but twenty-five of these legions did not nearly represent the total army of the Roman Empire, because to each of the legions was attached at least an equal number of auxiliaries, light-armed troops. Thus the establishment of a legion in any district meant a huge increase of population, a very large castrum or camp, from which we get the names of such places as Manchester, Dorchester, and Chester itself—Chester being a modification of the Roman word castrum. Besides the auxiliaries, who were light-armed foot-soldiers, there were a few mounted troops attached to each legion, but the chief of the fighting was supposed to be done by the legionaries, or soldiers of the legions. Just as we saw that among the Greeks the hoplites, the heavy-armed soldiers of the phalanx, were considered to form the strength of the army, so it was with the heavy-armed legionaries of the Romans.

The tradition was still kept up, that the legionaries should be men who had the privileges of free citizens of Rome, while the auxiliaries were taken from a lower class of the people who had not these privileges. But we have seen that this privilege was given to more and more as time went on, so that Roman citizenship ceased to be as valuable as it once was, because it

had become more common. Recruits to the legions were taken from the natives of the conquered lands. Moreover, since the legionaries in these settled camps were allowed to marry, their sons were naturally disposed to become soldiers, like their fathers, when they grew up.

The effect of all this was to make the legions very closely attached to the places in which their permanent camps were pitched. The camps became home to them. They no longer looked to Rome as their home ; and by degrees they ceased to look to Rome as the centre at which what we should call their Head-quarter Staff resided. They became more and more independent of Rome. If an attack came, or was threatened, from the barbarians beyond the limits which they had to guard, they dealt with the threat or the attack. They were not obliged to send back to Rome for their instructions.

Realise then, for it is of much importance in the development of the great story, the increasing independence of the legions in their large camps, when once these camps had been established as permanent settlements. We left the story, at the end of the first volume, at a point where its threads had been gathered together in the great hand of the Roman Empire. This second volume is largely occupied with the disruption and pulling apart of those threads out of that hand ; and the reason why the hand was obliged to relax its grasp and so allow the threads to be torn apart again is twofold. One part of the reason is this independence of the "far flung" legions, which became less and less attentive and obedient to orders from the centre at Rome. Another part of the reason is that the barbarians beyond the limits began knocking at the walls harder and harder and finally broke through.

What is so interesting to see in this story is not

only the events that happened, but also (and perhaps more interesting still) the explanation why they happened as they did. I have tried to make clear how it was that the armies of the Empire grew to be almost independent of any orders coming from the centre, and how that independence partly explained the break-up of the Empire.

I must now try to make clear to you why it was that the barbarians knocked as they did at the walls and finally broke through them and so completed the disruption of the power of Rome.

CHAPTER III

THE BARBARIAN AT THE WALLS

FOR a whole hundred years now, that is from A.D. 200 to 300, this greatest story in the world is really made up of a succession of small stories, each almost exactly the same as the last. They are stories about the "barbarian," at some point or other of the boundaries of the Empire, trying to break through, here and there succeeding in making a breach in the wall, and penetrating into the Empire, but again and again being thrust back, so that the old boundaries, as established by Hadrian, were on the whole tolerably well maintained all through this hundred years.

The first serious break in the wall was made by a tribe called the Franks, from the east side of the Rhine, breaking through the boundary between the Empire and Germany. There was at least one other tribe in alliance with the Franks in this invasion, but it is the Franks of whom we should, I think, take notice particularly, because here we find them for the first time in what the Romans called Gaul, and in what is now called, from these very Franks, or from their descendants, France.

But they did not remain long in Gaul at that time. They were driven out by the legions. And the legions in that province had to do the work of driving them out without getting any help from Rome. The result of that was that these legions, finding that they had to rely on themselves, thought that they might as well have a government of their own. They

chose an "emperor" for themselves, a "Gallic Empire" was founded—the Empire of Gaul—and it was obeyed even across the Pyrenees, in Spain, and across the Channel, in Britain. This so-called Gallic Empire had an existence of about thirty years, after which it was overthrown and the Empire of Rome was re-established over Gaul.

The story was almost exactly repeated in other parts of the Empire. The Goths, a tribe perhaps of the same race and origin as the Franks, and of similar habits, but living not so far towards the north, broke in across the Danube. They were a very formidable force, and overran the Balkans. They defeated a Roman army, under the Emperor Decius himself, and Decius was killed in the battle. We must not allow ourselves to be misled by the term "barbarian," applied by the Romans to all these peoples, and to think of them as mere savages. These Goths had possessions on the Black Sea and they are said to have sent out, during this century, a fleet estimated at 500 ships which made incursions along the coasts of Asia Minor and Greece as formidable as any that the Vikings, later on, made further north. They actually stormed and pillaged such cities as Corinth and Athens.

Further east the Persians came pressing in upon the Empire. They were defeated and driven back by the Syrian *dux Orientis*, duke of the East, as he was called. He was no more than a high official, appointed by Rome, but after this success against the Persians he proclaimed himself as an independent prince, the Prince of Palmyra. Zenobia, his widow, who succeeded him in his real power, though a young son was the successor to his title, maintained the independence of Palmyra, and even conquered Egypt, but again there happened that which we have seen more than once in the course of the great story—the

enemies of Rome prevail against her for a while, until she is provoked to put forth her full strength against them; but, once she is roused to strenuous action, they go down before her. Zenobia was defeated and brought in triumph to Rome about twenty-four years before the end of the century, and in A.D. 300 the Roman Empire stood within its bounds not greatly changed from its bounds of a hundred years before. There was, however, a real, if not a very visible, difference: the "barbarians," although for the time thrust back, had probably learnt that the Roman power was not quite invincible; and the legions guarding the frontiers had learnt that they had to rely on their own forces, without assistance from the central headquarters at Rome, for repelling the barbarians, and therefore felt less disposed to look on Rome as their master.

The condition of the Empire within its frontiers was far less prosperous at the close than it had been at the beginning of the century. We saw how the Greek thought and culture had been carried along the Roman roads to the far boundaries of the Empire. But although the barbarian armies were still kept outside those boundaries, a great many of the barbarians had come to settle within the Empire and had been taken into the legions. No doubt some of them learned the arts and the wisdom and the civilisation which the Romans had learnt from the Greeks, but on the other hand they prevented the spreading of these good lessons throughout the world. If they became somewhat "Romanised," the Roman Empire at the same time became somewhat "barbarised," by their coming in. Moreover Gaul, as we have seen, had been the scene of war, and so, too, parts of Italy itself, Greece, the Balkans, as we should call the district now, Asia Minor and Egypt. There was scarcely a corner of the Empire in which the *Pax*

Romana had not been broken. Therefore the fields were waste, the population diminished, the towns were partially abandoned, trade was nearly at a standstill. Disease and lack of food followed in the train of war.

Thus, although the boundaries of the Empire stood in the year A.D. 300 much as they had stood a hundred years before, the Empire within had grown far weaker. If the barbarian should break through again, as it was most likely that he would, there would not be the old strength to repel him. But, before we come to the actual breaking-through point, we would do well to consider a question which I expect will have come to your minds: What sort of people, of what race, and of what habits of life were these barbarians, so-called, and what was the reason why they kept on thus trying to break in upon the Empire?

We get our first knowledge of the way of life of these barbarians from the great Roman historian Tacitus; and his account is especially interesting to us, who are English, because it is the account of the way in which those people lived who were our own ancestors. For the very name of English or Englishmen, we may take it, was not known in the Britain of that day, nor for some time after A.D. 300. There were English, as we have noted, in Sleswig, and to north and south of them were Jutes and Saxons. The three were closely allied in race and in language, and the Romans, because they came into touch with the Saxons chiefly, the most southern of the tribes, called them all Saxon. It seems, however, that among themselves they commonly used the word English, which strictly was the name of the nation or tribe in the middle, to include all three tribes. All were Englishmen, but the Jutes and Saxons were distinct, though allied, tribes within the English description.

The barbarians that Tacitus writes of lived to the south and east of these, on the eastern side of the Rhine, but what he has to say about them we may take to apply to those forefathers of our own, because, just as the name English included Jutes and Saxons, so too the English and many others, such as the Goths and the Franks, were all to be included under a name of wider meaning still. All were related. All spoke a language which had evidently come from the same original source, though different tribes had learnt to speak rather differently because they had lived far apart from each other for a great many years. All had very similar customs and ways of life, and the same religion. Christianity had not yet come to them.

What Tacitus tells us is that all these allied nations were made up of people living the life of farmers. They liked to live separately from each other, in families apart. Their farm would consist of as much plough land as the head of the family and his sons and daughters could work and keep in good order, and as much pasture land as his cattle required. These farmers would be established in the midst of the great forests which covered all the land. They would be either in natural glades in these forests or in clearances made by the people themselves.

Each family lived by itself on its farm ; but within a certain region there would be a collection of these farms, not far apart from each other ; and this gathering of farms would form a tribe, or a division within a tribe, by itself, apart from any other tribe. And immediately surrounding each tribal group it seems as if the forest was always left in its natural state, so that there was a wide strip, or "mark"—a word we find later in the form of the "march" and the "marches"—between one and the other. This strip was always dangerous to traverse. It was the home

of wild beasts. Moreover the farmers imagined it to be the home of evil spirits of many kinds which might lead men astray and destroy them. And it was necessary, if a man did have the courage and fortune to make his way safely through this terrible belt of forest, that he should sound his horn loudly as he passed the further side of it and came into the farmed land of one of another tribe. If he did not give notice of his coming by this horn-blowing, he was to be suspected as an enemy, and was liable to be killed without further inquiry.

Thus, you see, these communities were made up of men owning their own land. They were free-holders, as we should say. And, because they owned land, they had the rights of free-holders, or free men. The right, really, was the right of self-government. For although they lived so much apart from each other, and were, as Tacitus tells us, very much attached to their independent way of living, yet they had intercourse together. To the Roman historian, accustomed to the crowded cities of Italy, their solitary way of living would naturally seem extraordinary, and very likely it was not quite so solitary as his description would make us think. They had, at all events, their government, their laws and customs, and had, as it appears, perfect liberty for arranging all these for themselves.

They used to meet from time to time, probably at a set time once a year, in a certain place, generally a hill, to which a certain sacredness was ascribed on that account, and there they would hold courts of law, to settle disputes brought before them, and would impose sentences, and discuss matters of interest to the tribe generally. Every free-man, every free-holder of land, had a right to be there and to give his vote. The man who had no land had no vote; he had no rights. So it was held a dreadful thing in

those days to be a "land-less" man. These freeholders were called "ceorls" (in later English, "churls"), and "ceorl" really means "man"; as if to imply that those who had not the right which the possession of land gave were hardly men at all. And of the "ceorls" there were some larger proprietors, who were called "eorls" (later "earls"). From that word too we get the "eorldermen" (or eldersmen), who sometimes deliberated apart at the meetings and were greatly considered, as men of position and wisdom. But they had no rights over the "ceorls," except such as the "ceorls" voted to them and might take back again by vote.

If any man deemed himself injured by another he could bring his case before the court, and if he made it good the court would award him compensation for the injury done him in the form of some cattle, or other valuable property to be given over to him by the man that did him the injury. The amount of the compensation it would be part of the work of the court of law to settle when it was assembled at the "mote hill" or place where the eldersmen of the tribe gathered for the purpose.

But, you may say, that is all very well for the man who had suffered an injury that was not fatal. You could compensate him, perhaps. But how about a man that had been killed? You could not very well compensate him.

You could not. All you could do in a case like this would be to make the killer give compensation, in form of a heavy fine of cattle or goods, to the wife and family of the murdered man. But that would not be enough: the killer must be personally punished too, probably with death.

And then you may say that, if he was to be punished with death, it would not much matter to him how many of his cattle or how much of his goods were

taken from him and given to the family of the man he had killed.

It would not—to him personally ; but it would matter to his wife and family. They would be the poorer by the amount of the fine that was paid. And it is thought likely that it was in this way that the custom grew of looking upon the family of a person who had suffered wrong as the people who were to be compensated for the wrong, rather than the sufferer himself ; and also of looking upon the family of the man who had done the wrong as the people who should make the compensation, rather than the wrong-doer himself.

The result of that was to make each person in the family look upon every other person of the same family as one whose acts might make a great deal of difference to him. The whole family had to suffer when any of its members did wrong : the whole family had a claim against a person who had wronged one of its members.

So they had this sentiment, that all the members of a family were dependent each on the acts of the other, and that they must suffer together when wrong was done ; but in other ways they were very independent people.

They seem to have been generally tall and big, both men and women. They had light hair, which even the men allowed to grow long, so as to fall on their shoulders, blue eyes and fair complexions.

That is a general description which may serve for all the tribes of the barbarians which came knocking on the northern and eastern walls of the Empire in Europe all the way down from Sleswig, where the Saxons were, to the lands occupied by the Goths, some of whom lived as far east as the shores of the Black Sea, where they had formed, as we have seen, a large fleet. It is possible for a general account like this to serve for the many different tribes and nations

into which the barbarians on this boundary of the Empire were split up, because they were all of one race originally, rather as we of Great Britain and most of the Americans are of the Anglo-Saxon race, although we are now of different nations.

All these peoples, of whom it is convenient to speak by the Roman term of barbarians, were of the great family of mankind that is called the Indo-European—that is the more general name, including them all, of which I wrote a few pages back. It is given that name, because some of the family went south, into India, and some west, into Europe, out of some region in the north and east, which seems to have been a great hive or nursery of mankind out of which we came swarming south and west.

This hive seems to have had its home perhaps in the west of Russia; but little is known about it. Probably it would be more right to speak of many hives, scattered over a large region, than of one. But we may know that the scattered members of the family—those in India and those in Europe—are related by the similarity of some of the most common words, or parts of words, in the languages of India and of those lands of which the European members of the family got possession.

Besides its troubles from the threats of these barbarians on its north-west borders, the Empire, as we have seen, had its troubles through most of this century from Persians and others on the south-east; and I now want to ask you to notice an effect of these troubles and threats of trouble on the Empire itself, for it was an effect which made a very great difference to the story. This effect was the dividing up of the one Empire into two, with a Western Empire, as of old, having its seat of government at Rome; but also with an Eastern Empire having its centre of government at Byzantium, as Constantinople was then called.

CHAPTER IV

THE DIVISION OF THE EMPIRE

THE causes that led to the dividing up of the Empire are easily understood. What is far less easy to understand is how Rome ruled the world, as the world then was known, so long as she did. Remember this : at that time you could only travel, and you could only send a message, as fast as a horse could gallop, if it was by land that you went or sent ; and only as fast as a ship—a ship with a very simple and primitive way of setting the sails—could be urged through the water by sailing or by rowing, if your going was by sea. For practical purposes of getting news or of moving troops, the world of the Romans of that date, say from Egypt to Britain at its furthest points, was a very great deal larger than the whole of the globe is to us to-day. If you can understand it in that sense, their Empire was very much larger, much less under the eye and the direction of the centre of government, than the whole British Empire to-day. And we find that large enough. The Romans had the further trouble, which we have not, that the leaders of the legions in the provinces, when they had repelled the barbarians, sometimes claimed to be independent of the central authority, as we saw both in Gaul and in Asia Minor.

So the wonder really is, not that Rome should at length fail to govern all this Empire from one centre, but that she should have succeeded in doing so at all,

and for so long. From causes which I have spoken of already, the home government was not as strong as it had been; and as the power at the centre grew less the pressure of the barbarians on the boundaries grew more. Especially it became convenient to have a centre of government nearer the boundary on the south-east, where the eastern barbarians were constantly making their attacks and where a great leader of the army, if he checked the attack, might become too strong for the authority of Rome to control unless it put forth all its force. A solution of the trouble was attempted by the Emperor Diocletian, who came to the imperial throne in 284. What he did was to appoint a colleague for himself to whom he gave his own title of Augustus, though he also retained the title for himself. There were, therefore, two Augusti. And besides the Augusti, he appointed two leaders of armies in the provinces to bear the title of Cæsar. Thus there were two Cæsars and two Augusti. The Empire and its armies were portioned out between these four great persons. Diocletian himself had the command of the army of Syria. His colleague, the other Augustus, commanded the armies of Italy and of Africa. One of the Cæsars had the armies guarding the Rhine, and the other the armies guarding the Danube boundary.

In this way were the Empire and its defending forces divided up. The Cæsars were considered to be in an inferior position to the Augusti, and as between the Augusti themselves Diocletian was supposed to be the superior of the other. We may think it likely that the Emperor, in making these appointments, did little more than give his formal approval to arrangements that already existed, in fact. Very probably these important persons would have been able to make themselves practically independent of the Emperor, even if he had not given them these

offices, and very likely they were the more ready to pay him some show of deference because he had given them his approval.

There is one point about the arrangement to which I would call your attention, and that is that Diocletian, who claimed to be the superior of them all, assumed, for his own command, the army of Syria, of the East. You will perceive what that seems to indicate—that the Romans had begun to look upon the Eastern side of the Empire as more important than the Western. As early as the year 300, or even earlier, this was their view.

In Diocletian's time we find that any claim of power by the people, the democracy, was entirely given up. The government was an autocracy; though there might be more than one autocrat. There was no longer any value in being a citizen of Rome. Rome and Italy had no privileges above the rest of the Empire. They were administered and taxed in the same way as all the provinces.

This formal division of authority under Diocletian did not long answer the purpose for which he designed it, and he and his fellow "Augustus" abdicated in 305, and for nearly twenty years there was continual fighting between rival "Emperors" elected by the different armies. For a time, but for a time only, peace within the Empire was gained under Constantine I.—Constantine the Great, as he was deservedly called. He deserves that distinguishing title if only for two acts of his reign which made a very great impression on the story of the world: he accepted the Christian religion as the recognised religion of the Empire, and he built the City of Constantine—Constantinople—to be the new capital of the Empire, the new centre.

He died, however, in 337, and immediately the fighting between rival Emperors was resumed. It

was nearly thirty years before the world had any peace from these rivalries. At length Valentinian is proclaimed Emperor by his soldiers, and he appoints, as his colleague and fellow "Augustus," his own brother Valens. To Valens he gives the title of Emperor of the East, with the capital of that Eastern Empire at Constantinople. For himself he takes the Empire of the West, with its capital still at Rome. It appears that the independence of the two Empires is complete. Their boundaries are defined, the limit of the Eastern Empire being drawn so far to the west as to include Macedonia and Greece.

Of all the Indo-European tribes or nations the most powerful, the most numerous and that which occupied the largest territory, was the great nation of the Goths. They may have come down from Scandinavia—from Norway and Sweden. There are some evidences which make that likely, but the evidence is not very clear. They owned the country along the boundary of the Roman Empire from the Danube to the Vistula.

And behind all these tribes of Indo-Europeans settled for the most part in what we now call Germany and Austria—behind them, that is to say to the north and east, in the region of that great hive or nursery of mankind which seems to have been somewhere in the north of Asia—there was another nation, not belonging to the Indo-European family, not speaking a language that resembled theirs, not made up of persons at all like these Indo-Europeans in appearance. The Indo-Europeans, whom it will perhaps be more convenient to call Germans, because they lived in the countries now occupied by Germans and Austrians—these German tribesmen were tall and fair. This other nation, to the eastward, was of small dark men. They were called Huns.

You may remember that antiquaries—men learned

in ancient history—tell us that man, in his progress to civilisation, has passed through two rather distinct stages—the hunting stage and the pastoral stage—and through them came to a third stage, the agricultural, when he settled down to grow crops. The German tribes were already in this third stage, at the point which our story has reached, but the Huns were in the second stage only; they wandered, with their flocks and herds.

This nation of little dark men seems, by their language and by other evidences, as if it must have been related to the Finns, of Finland. The evidences, however, are not very clear; but what is tolerably clear is that they were a numerous and a warlike race of little dark men, and that they kept up a constant pressure, from the north and east, upon the Goths and other German tribes; especially on the more eastern Goths, called Ostrogoths.

And very often it seems to have been that pressure of the Huns from the North and East that made the Germans try and try again to break through the boundary of the Roman Empire and work their way towards the west. The first of these breaks through, however, which had any success, was in a southward, rather than a westward direction. It was a break through of the Goths towards Constantinople, and it was very formidable indeed.

When Diocletian appointed a colleague for himself, a second "Augustus," he, as we saw, took the Eastern command for himself and gave the Western to the colleague. When Valentinian finally divided the Empire between himself and his brother Valens, he took the West and gave the East to his brother. It is possible that he may have foreseen something of the trouble that was soon to come on that eastern side. Within three years of his accession to the throne of Constantinople Valens was called upon to lead his legions to

repel a great incursion of the Goths. He met them at Adrianople and suffered a terrible defeat. He himself was killed in the battle. The barbarians pressed on. They were at the walls of Constantinople.

A hundred years before this, Goths, crossing the Danube, had fought and conquered Roman legions and had killed an Emperor, namely Decius, who is notorious for his cruel persecution of the Christians known in history as "the Decian persecutions." The Goths had at this time been checked by further Roman forces that were brought against them, but it was then that the Empire lost the province of Dacia, which lay north and east of the Danube, and the Danube thereafter became the boundary.

Now the children of these Goths, rather more than a hundred years later, were across the Danube again, had again conquered the legions and again a Roman Emperor had been slain by them in battle. Constantine had himself been forced to fight the Goths in Thrace, and, when building his new capital, had encircled it with defensive walls. It was well for his successors that he did so. The Gothic army was held before the walls. A large number of their nation had already crossed the Danube and had been admitted as peaceful settlers within the bounds of the Empire. It is certain that Gothic invaders from north of the Danube would find many friends, for the Goths already settled in the Empire were dissatisfied with their treatment by the Romans. And even in the Roman legions that they defeated there would be many of their countrymen, for the recruiting of barbarians among the legionaries had been going on for more than one century. Theodosius the Great, who had succeeded Valens, killed by the Goths, as Emperor of the East, made a treaty with the conquerors, which was faithfully observed until the death of Theodosius in 395. But then the Goths

threw off the yoke which the treaty had put upon their necks.

It was fortunate indeed for the Empire that the Persians were no longer a danger on the eastern boundary. A peace with that nation had been arranged in 364, and was not broken for nearly 150 years.

The Goths were divided into several different tribes, not always at peace with each other; and especially into Visigoths and Ostrogoths—that is Western Goths and Eastern. They were so completely divided by the end of the fourth century that the Ostrogoths had fallen under the domination of the Huns, while the Visigoths, further westward, were independent of that fierce and strange people.

But even these Western Goths felt the pressure, pushing them westward, of the Hun, though not so directly. They had the Ostrogoths in between, and sometimes we actually find the Ostrogoths, with the Huns, fighting against the Visigoths. Thus intermixed was the fighting.

And you should know too that although the Romans still called these nations barbarians, many barbarians had come to high honour and great power in one or other of the Roman cities. The division between Roman and barbarian was not nearly so distinct and sharp as the word “barbarian” suggests to us. It was not possible that there should be much idea of inequality between them, seeing that the barbarian could hold such high honour in the chief places of the Empire.

CHAPTER V

THE BARBARIAN BREAKING THROUGH

YOU will see now what the story told in the first few chapters of this volume is, for the most part, about. It is about the efforts of the Empire—on the whole, the successful efforts of the Empire—to keep itself intact within its walls and to keep the barbarians out. The pressure of those barbarians without, together with the weakened state of the Empire itself, has led to the division of the Eastern from the Western Empire. And that is the story up to close on the year 400.

After that year 400, or a few years before, the story changes. It is no longer about the efforts of the Empire to keep the barbarian out. The barbarian is triumphantly breaking through; and it is with that break through, and with all that happened to the Empire, as a consequence, that the story has now to deal.

We shall think it curious, as we follow it, to note how the different tribes of the barbarians seem as if they acted together, in concert with each other, from the northern extremity of the Empire's boundary right down to where we saw those Visigoths permitted to settle south of the Danube. They seem to have pressed in from the east, within the space of very few years, along the whole of that boundary.

Probably it was by no pre-concerted arrangement, that is to say not following any already arranged

plan, that they pressed in along that boundary nearly all at the same time. Probably what happened was that all of them were feeling a pressure from the Huns, their neighbours on the east: so that they were all ready to move. Then, when one tribe heard of the success of another in moving west, the tribe that heard this news would be encouraged to attempt a westward push on its own account. That push would be all the more likely to succeed because the Roman legions were busy trying to stop those that had moved westward already.

To what extent they acted together in order to help each other we do not know—probably with very little idea of giving each other this help, for often when they encountered each other in the course of the westward move, they actually fought amongst themselves. What we do know—and it is a fact that made a great difference to the story of our own islands—is that within a very short time the Empire found its legions so hard beset on the Continent of Europe that it recalled the three legions that had been holding Britain. This happened in 407.

I have already, I think, mentioned the names of all those Indo-European or Germanic tribes that occupy chief place in the story with the exception of the Vandals. These Vandals had their home somewhere between the Oder and the Vistula, in modern Prussia, and they travelled further than any of the rest, actually going down through Spain, across into Africa, turning eastward again and working their way along the north coast of Africa, establishing themselves at Carthage, equipping a great fleet there and crossing over and taking Rome itself by assault from the sea—a very wonderful story indeed.

But the first people to move in this great irruption, or break in, of the barbarians into the Empire were those most southern, the Visigoths. They pressed

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along, not southward this time but westward, into Gaul.

We always have to bear in mind that these movements of the tribes westward were not like the marches of an army only, but rather like the migrations of a whole people. It was land, land to settle on and to live in without vexation from Huns and other enemies, that they came to seek; and they brought with them their wives and children and live stock, to settle them down on the newly won land. It seems to have been the custom of all these tribes to take to themselves one-third of the land that they conquered, leaving the conquered people two-thirds—a far more generous proceeding than we should have expected from them. But we have seen something of their institutions and courts of law. Although called “barbarians,” they were far from being what we should term savages. They had, however, very little idea of learning or arts or science. The Greek thought had not penetrated among them, although many of them had by this time become Christian. They were not nearly so advanced in civilisation as the Romans, and their conquest of all Western Europe checked the progress of civilisation and threw all mankind backward into ways of life and of thought that probably the Romans and Greeks never expected man to return to.

It was under pressure of their own kinsmen, the Ostrogoths, acting with their superior lords, the Huns, that the Visigoths at this time invaded Gaul and pushed into the north of Italy and down into Greece. They had become Christians. A large number of monks came with the armies and, in their religious zeal, destroyed many beautiful temples of the pagan gods in Greece and elsewhere.

The westward advance of the Goths was not continuous. It met with checks from the legions, but

again and again they came on, like waves of the sea, returning after retreating. In 402 they were driven back, but in a later invasion they came three times, in three successive years, up to the walls of Rome itself: that is, in 408, 409, and 410; and some time in these years it seems that a large force of the Ostrogoths joined their kinsmen of the Western Goths in this Italian invasion. These Eastern Goths were still pagans. In 410 the Goths actually entered and sacked Rome. The effect of this was that the Empire was compelled, if it was to survive at all, to make some terms of peace with the invaders, even if the terms meant that it had to give up a large territory to them. This is precisely what happened. Within a few years after the sack of Rome the Goths had established themselves in the south of Gaul and pushed down over the Pyrenees into Spain. Their Spanish conquests at this time were given back to the Roman Empire, though some of the Goths remained in Spain, but by way of compensation Rome recognised what was known as the Visigothic Kingdom of Toulouse. This Visigothic territory reached right across to the Atlantic Ocean and as far north as the River Loire.

But now we ought to take a look at what was happening a little further north again, for this pressing through of the Germanic barbarians went on, as I have said, all along the eastern boundary. Just as the Goths had come flooding in from across the Danube, so too came the Vandals from across the Rhine. This happened in 406 or 407; and it was in 407 that the Empire, harassed by all these incursions from the east, was obliged to withdraw its legions from Britain.

We have seen something already of a tribe or nation called Franks, that had passed into Northern Gaul some years before this and had been repelled by the Romans. But some of them stayed within the Empire's bounds on terms of friendship with the

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Romans, and when the Vandals appeared in Gaul these Franks met them in a great battle wherein the Vandals are said to have lost two thousand killed—a very large number, considering the comparatively small armies of the time. The effect of this beating seems, curiously enough, to have been, not to send them back, as we should expect, to the north-east, whence they came. Instead of that we find them going onward, south-west, and two years later crossing the Pyrenees into Spain. They fought there with the Visigoths and other German tribes that had found their way there before them, and in the end—that is to say, after twenty or more years—had taken possession of that southern part of Spain which is called Andalusia.

And then a very strange thing happened, and they undertook an extraordinary adventure, which we have already just glanced at.

A stretch of the northern coast of Africa, along the south of the Mediterranean Sea, belonged to the Western Roman Empire. It ran from the Straits of Gibraltar eastward to the boundary of the province of Egypt which was part of the Eastern Empire. All this strip was put under the command of a Roman official who had the title of Count of Africa.

Just at this time the Count of Africa had given offence to the Imperial authority, and, in his fear of what the offended majesty of Rome might do to him, he invited the Vandals to come across the straits to his assistance. They came—probably in larger numbers than he had reckoned on. Eighty thousand of them, in all, including the women and children, are said to have come. The Count of Africa quickly repented of what he had done. He patched up his quarrel with the Emperor, and then set to work to turn out these guests and helpers that he had invited. But they were by no means so ready to go as they had

been to come. They fought to remain, and so successfully that within two years of their landing in Africa they had possession of all the Roman territory along that shore with the exception of three cities, of which Carthage was the chief. At this time Carthage was estimated as the most important city, after Rome and Constantinople, in the Empire. And a few years later again, the Vandal king, breaking a treaty which he had made with Rome, attacked and took Carthage itself; and so, once again, this city, which had been the source of such deadly peril to the Empire in the days of Hannibal, fell into an enemy's hands; and it was for nearly a hundred years held in those hands.

Thus, to the year 440 or so, we may trace the extraordinary fortunes of this people to their zenith—their highest point. There, for the moment, we leave them.

Now a great part of the reason why the Vandals in Spain were so very ready to respond to the invitation of the Count of Africa was that the Visigoths with some allied tribes were pressing upon them there very much more severely than was pleasant. Spain is a country, as you should know, very much cut up and divided by mountain ranges, so that it was difficult for any conqueror to conquer the whole of the country, because those who were defeated could retreat into the mountainous places from which it was hard to hunt them out. You will find this happening again and again in the story of what we now call Spain. It is not certain, but it seems likely, that the people called Basques, living along the Pyrenees, are descendants of those Celts whom we saw moving westward and settling as Brythons in Britain and in Brittany. If that is so, they have maintained their language and their national character to this day, in spite of the many conquerors that have, at one time

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or other in the great story, had possession of the greater part of Spain.

I write sometimes of "Spain" and sometimes of "Italy," and so forth, because it seems the natural and easy way of indicating the lands which we now speak of by those names; but they were not so known at the time of which I am telling you. And I would warn you against a mistake into which we are only too ready to fall—the mistake of supposing that this Spain and this Italy, for example, have certain natural boundaries—that there is any particular reason, apart from the arrangements, the treaties and so on, which nations, in the course of the story, have made with each other, why they should have the bounds which are set to them to-day. It is true that these arrangements about the territory allotted to each are determined in some measure by the natural features, as we call them—by mountain ranges and by big rivers—but if it were not for these arrangements there is no reason in nature why the countries should be divided out among mankind as they are, and the divisions are continually being changed all through the story.

Now the Visigoths, as soon as they were free of the Vandals, extended their Kingdom of Toulouse, as it was called, towards the west until they were masters of nearly all Spain; but that was not until, in conjunction with the Romans, they had attended to another business further north—that is to the invasion of Gaul by Attila, King of the Huns. That Hunnish invasion was checked and pushed back by a great battle fought near Chalons in 451; and, curiously enough, it was almost exactly at the same place that the advance of the Eastern power, the Germans, was checked and repelled in the Great War of a few years ago. In this battle against the Huns, which was one of the battles that has made a great difference in the

story of the world, there were fighting together, Romans, Visigoths and also Franks.

The Franks, as we saw before, were perhaps the first of the Germanic tribes to break through the Roman wall. But on that first incursion they were repulsed and made a treaty with the Empire. Then they came again in the year 429 and, though defeated once, gradually fought their way south beyond the Somme River, and eventually right down to the Loire. South of that region they fought as allies of the Romans as late as 460.

The battle at, or near, Chalons counted for a great deal in our story. The Huns were a far more savage and uncultured people than any of the former invading tribes, and it really was a battle fought on behalf of civilisation, as civilisation was then understood, between the Romans, Goths, and Franks on the one side and the Huns and savagery on the other. And with these Huns were some of the Ostrogoths, whom we thus find fighting against their own kinsmen. One of the results of the battle was that the Ostrogoths now shook off the yoke of the Huns and became again an independent people.

And not only was the battle of Chalons a battle on behalf of civilisation; it was a battle on behalf of Christianity too, for the Huns—probably one and all—and the Ostrogoths, for the most part, were pagans, and the Goths and Franks and Romans nearly all Christians.

Therefore you see that Romans and barbarians had come together and made common cause, as we say, by the middle of the fifth century. Let us see what was happening in Britain in the meantime, now that the Roman soldiers had been withdrawn from it

CHAPTER VI

HOW BRITAIN BECAME ENGLAND

WE might naturally expect to find that as soon as the conquering Romans left our island, the native Brythons would rejoice in their freedom and in getting rid of their masters. They had, indeed, made an attempt, under their Queen Boadicca, to free themselves while the legions still were there, but the attempt had failed. The good discipline and fighting qualities of the Romans had been too much for them.

So, for a short while after the Roman soldiers went, they may have rejoiced in their freedom; but they did not rejoice long. You remember those walls that the Romans built across the island, and what their purpose was. It was to help keep out the Picts and Caledonians, those wild tribes that lived in what we call the Highlands of Scotland. We should regard these walls, not as insurmountable barriers, but merely as aids to defence, connecting camps and forts established at intervals along them. And within a very short time of the withdrawal of the Roman garrison, or guards, the Picts were over the wall and constantly harrying and robbing and killing the Britons.

Now the story goes that the Britons, worn by the perpetual inroads of the Northerners, invited to their assistance certain princes of the Saxon people—the people, you will remember, who lived in Sleswig. There were Jutes in the North of that country—in Jutland—then Angli, as the Romans called them,

that is English, in the middle, and Saxons in the south. But both Angli and Saxons were names used to cover all those people. The names were used rather inexactly.

These Anglo-Saxons—let us call them so, for that will include both the covering names—were great sea-farers, rovers, pirates. They went on marauding expeditions in their ships just as the Phœnicians had gone marauding long before and just as the Northmen, the Vikings, went a little later. It may be they were invited by the Britons; it may be they came without invitation, as their pirate fleet went down along the east coast of Britain. If they were invited, the result was very much like the result of the invitation which we saw that the Count of Africa gave to the Vandals. The Vandals came and helped him; but then they helped themselves also so liberally that they drove him out of his own possessions. The Anglo-Saxons did just the same by the Britons. They helped them: they drove back the Caledonians: but then they stayed: they drove out the Britons: they established themselves in the island: they changed Britain, the land of the Britons, into England, the land of the Angles.

At least, they made that change over much of the island. We have noted its geography in an earlier chapter, and saw that the east and the south are less mountainous and therefore less strong for defence against an invader, than the west and north. So it was all down the East of England and along the southern part that the Anglo-Saxons settled. The Britons went back into the hills of Devon and Cornwall, of Wales and of Cumberland.

We have to picture to ourselves all the eastern and southern shores of Britain and the western coast of the Continent of Europe as very liable to the attack of one or other of the sea-rovers at this time, and, as a consequence of different tribes of these rovers arriving

in strength in different parts of our island, we find it divided into three different main kingdoms—in the north the kingdom of Northumbria, which reached up as far as the Firth of Forth; in the south the kingdom of Wessex, or the West Saxons; and between the two the kingdom of Marcia, or Mercia, which meant, originally, the kingdom of the Marches—of the “mark” or boundary between the English and the Britons.

The Briton had become Romanised—that is to say had adopted Roman ways of thought and living, and had lived under Roman law, while the legions were there. Of course, since the legions formed permanent encampments—practically towns—as we have seen, all the Romans and the Roman influence did not leave when the soldiers and the governors, appointed by Rome, went. The Britons had the Roman way of talking of these English as “barbarians”—men outside the pale.

Then these barbarians came in, just as they had come into Gaul, and conquered. But, for reasons that are not easily seen, they treated the conquered people, the Britons, with far more severity than the Continental conquerors showed. Perhaps they were of a fiercer race. Whatever the reason, they came killing, exterminating the natives; and, whereas in Gaul and other provinces that the Germans conquered, the Roman methods of law and all the Roman customs were allowed to go on, in Britain the Anglo-Saxons did away with all the Roman institutions and manners. They brought in their own ways and their own religion.

They were pagans, and the native Britons had become Christian. Perhaps that, in part, is why they treated the Britons so badly. But we have to be on our guard about believing quite all that is told us of their cruelty; because the only people who have told us about it, who wrote the history of the time

and of the doings of the conquerors, were clerics, clerks of the holy orders, monks of a Christian monastery.

Britain had been Christian, because the Romans had introduced Christianity and established it in the stead of the old Druid religion of which the great stone circle at Stonehenge remains as a monument. But England was now pagan, and followed the religion of the North, whose gods were Woden, or Odin, the god



K. K. Lawton.]

STONEHENGE.

[Salisbury.

The Druidical circle, from the air, at the present day.

of battles, who gives us our name for one of the days of the week—Woden's day, or Wednesday, and Thor, the god of the hammer, the great smith, like Vulcan in the religion which the Romans took from Greece. From Thor we get our Thursday. And Freia, the goddess who was supposed to be the wife of Odin, gives us our Friday. Tuesday is the day of the god Tiw.

By way of completing the story of our week-days—Sunday, of course, is the day of the Sun; Monday, of the Moon. And Saturday—and you

should note this, because it shows what a mixture our language is of words taken from the Saxon on the one side and from the Latin, the Roman, on the other—Saturday is the day of Saturn, one of the Roman gods adopted from the Greek.

For more than a century England remained pagan. It was not till very nearly A.D. 600 that any attempt was made to bring in Christianity again. That attempt was made in the south-eastern corner of England, just where the Anglo-Saxon pagans themselves had landed, and quite near our present chief cathedral town of Canterbury. But the revival of Christianity in England did not really come that way. The northern kingdoms in England were too strong for any influence from the southern kingdom to prevail. Christianity was reintroduced into England from Ireland, whither the Saxons had never come to destroy it. It came by way of an island, Iona, off the west coast of Scotland, and so across to the Holy Island, off the coast of Northumberland.

Then arose great fighting between the heathen, under Penda, King of Mercia and of the "Middle English," as you will read of their being called, and Christians under Oswi, King of Northumbria. Oswi utterly defeated Penda in A.D. 655 and from that victory followed the establishment of Christianity as the accepted religion over the British islands.

All this story of England under the rule of the Anglo-Saxons is separate and quite apart, for very many years, from the rest of the great story, which is, at this time, chiefly concerned with the destruction by the barbarians of the Western Roman Empire. It will come very closely into the great story again before many centuries are past, and you will see that it is closely involved in it by the time we reach the end of this volume; but until 600 or so, England is rather out of the main current of European history.

CHAPTER VII

THE PASSING OF THE BARBARIAN

WE left the Vandals in 450 established in possession of all the African shore that had belonged to the Western Empire. The place of chief importance that fell into their hands was Carthage, that city from which so much trouble had come to Rome several centuries before. And just as had happened before, so it happened again now. The Carthaginians descendants of those famous sea-rovers, the Phœnicians, had made Carthage, with its fine harbour, the headquarters of a fleet which went raiding and marauding all over the Mediterranean Sea. So too, now, the king of the Vandals assembled a great fleet which acted in just the same piratical way. Its first act was to defeat, so completely as practically to destroy it, the fleet of the Western Empire, and thereafter it became the terror of the Mediterranean, and its act of final and most unbearable insolence was when it came into the Tiber and the Vandals attacked and sacked Rome itself. This was in 455.

It is only a few years before, that we heard of the Goths "sacking" Rome. We may begin to ask ourselves what exactly is meant by this "sacking"; for we may wonder that there was very much left, after a while, to sack.

We have to remember, however, just as we had to remember when we were learning about the dreadful suffering of the Britons at the hands of the Anglo-Saxons, that all we know of what happened is what is

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told us by the sufferers of the "sacking." Probably the ferocity of it was a little exaggerated. You may have heard the phrase "an act of Vandalism," as describing some savage and senseless destruction of beautiful buildings and other works of art. And that description is taken from what the Vandals are supposed to have done when they sacked Rome. But the true story seems to be that they really did not destroy the most beautiful things in Rome, which were generally the temples to the old Greek gods. What they did destroy were the Christian churches. And they took away all the gold and silver they could lay their hands on, no doubt. But they destroyed the Christian churches just because they were pagans, and because Christianity was to them a false religion. It was a mistaken religious zeal which seems to have impelled them to do it. And since the men who have handed down the story were Christians, it is likely enough that the destruction would be described as somewhat worse than it really was.

Doubtless it was bad enough; and the Vandals were not at all pleasant pagans. They persecuted the Christians wherever they laid hands on them.

Now, we may follow the fortune of these Vandals until they disappear from the great story altogether. They continued their bad work as pirates and persecutors of the Christians for the best part of ~~many~~ years; and then there came against them a very great general of the Eastern Empire, Belisarius. In a hard-fought battle, Belisarius at length gained the victory over the Vandal king. It was a victory so complete that he could impose what terms he pleased on the conquered people. The whole fighting force of the Vandals that still survived was taken captive to Constantinople, where it was formed into a mounted guard and sent to fight the Empire's battles against that still unconquered enemy, the Persian, on the Eastern boundary.

Thus the Vandals were destroyed, and their very name passes out of the story after contributing to it one of its most remarkable episodes. Let us briefly recapitulate their story. Starting from somewhere on the shores of the Baltic, they come across Gaul and down into and through Spain, westward and southward. Then, crossing into Africa, they turn eastward again and become a great and terrible force, and finally are vanquished and taken yet further eastward to Constantinople and to Parthia, disappearing out of history at a point far eastward of their original starting-place for their westward journey. They have gone from the Baltic to the Black Sea, after travelling to the farthest western confines of the world as then known in order to get there.

So vanish, then, the Vandals.

Now as to those Visigoths, under whose pressure the Vandals were only too thankful to get out of Spain, we have seen them establishing their Kingdom of Toulouse, in the south of Gaul, and surging over the Pyrenees so that they made themselves masters of most of Spain. At first we find them making treaty with Rome under conditions which confess the superior sovereignty of the Roman Empire. But by the year 470 or so they have thrown off all pretence of regarding Rome as their mistress. They deal with her as an independent monarchy.

But though their kingdom is an independent kingdom, it is a kingdom based on the Roman model for its government. Its laws are the Roman laws. It has adopted Roman manners and Roman ways of thought. It does not, like the Anglo-Saxon government in Britain, impose German customs. It even gives to Roman habits and thought a vigour which they have lost in Rome itself. In Spain, at all events, their kingdom is to endure for the best part of three centuries, and it will then be ended by an actor who

has not yet appeared at all in the great story—the Saracen.

With that we may now dismiss the Visigoths from the story. The main scenes in which they took the chief rôle have been sketched, and they may go behind the scenes with the Vandals. Their influence, however, and their descendants remain: their effect on the story far greater and more lasting than that of the Vandals.

Very soon after the date 470, or so, of the Visigoths claiming independence, there happened in Rome itself an event which was full of interest and of meaning in the story. A barbarian, by name Odoacer, was appointed King of Italy. That in itself was a notable appointment. What made it more notable still is that, though calling himself King of Italy, he did not also call himself emperor.

It was an acknowledgment that the Western Empire had ceased to exist or had ceased to be governed from Rome. Odoacer recognised the emperor at Constantinople as the one and only emperor; and accepted from him an official title, that of "Patrician," showing clearly that he regarded himself as owing some sort of service and obedience to the emperor of the East. It made Rome and Italy seem of no greater importance than other provinces or kingdoms, such as the kingdom of the Visigoths with its capital at Toulouse, or that of the Vandals in Africa.

Under Odoacer, as king, Italy suffered invasion from yet another tribe of barbarians, from those Ostrogoths, related to the Visigoths, whom we saw under Attila fighting against their cousins at Chalons. The power of the Hun was so broken by the defeat of Chalons that these Ostrogoths were then able to free themselves from their dependence. Likely enough, however, the Hun still pressed hard on them from the

east, for although Attila's strength was shattered it was not wholly destroyed. Two years after the Chalons battle the "Scourge of God," as he was named, was at length killed, and most of the horde that he led was either exterminated or lost among the people of the land in which they made their last stand as fighters; but even this great host of Attila's we have to look on as only a "swarm," so to call it, from the main "hive" which still lived and multiplied somewhere in that immense territory which we now call Russia. Even three or four hundred years later we hear of Rome and Italy being menaced by Huns from the north at the same time as the Saracens are threatening from the south. For the moment, however, their defeats on the northern border of Italy, following on their disaster at, or near, Chalons, have sent them behind the scenes of our story. The Eastern Empire was threatened with an attack by them on Byzantium itself about ninety years later than the date of Attila's death; but this menace was dealt with successfully by that Belisarius whom we have already seen victorious over the Vandals. As he thrust the Vandals, so also it was he who thrust the Huns, out of the story.

But now, in Odoacer's reign, the Ostrogoths, free of the Huns, but still perhaps pushed westward by them, appear in North Italy. This happened in the year 488. Odoacer marched against them, but was heavily defeated, and was killed by the very hand of Theodoric, the famous king of these Eastern Goths. It was with the full knowledge and approval of the Eastern Emperor that these Goths thus invaded Italy, although the King of Italy had owed his kingdom in the first place to the Emperor at Constantinople. After their victory the Goths established themselves in North Italy, and this kingdom of the Ostrogoths in Italy lasted for about fifty years. By that time

there was certainly no force at the disposal of Rome that could drive them out; but the Eastern Empire then moved against them. Once more it was that great Byzantine general Belisarius who had command of the Empire's forces. Once more he was completely victorious. The Ostrogoths were compelled to relinquish their hold of the Italian territory; and so they too, having played their part, pass behind the scenes.

While they were in Italy they had stretched hands across the Alps, and had come into touch again with their kinsmen, those Western Goths that had their Kingdom of Toulouse in Southern Gaul. But even before the Eastern Goths were pushed out of the Italian kingdom that they had conquered, the hold of the Western Goths on their kingdom in Gaul had been loosened, the extent of that kingdom had been diminished, and they were left with little on the northern side of the Pyrenees—that is, with little outside of what we now call Spain.

This loss was inflicted on them by that tribe or nation of Germanic barbarians of which I have several times made mention already, the Franks.

As of the Goths, so too of these Franks, there were more than one tribe or nation, but the tribe which is most important in the story is that of the Salian Franks. It was so called either because it came from the River Saal, or, more likely, because it came from the "salt," the "saline" sea. You may have heard of the "Salic Law," which provides that the right of succession to the throne shall not be given to a son by relationship through the mother with the previous occupant of the throne. It must come through the father—"in the male line," as is said. That was one of the ancient laws of these Salic, or Salian Franks.

About the middle of the fourth century, that is to say about, or a little after, 350, they were invading Gaul, in the north, but were checked and defeated,

and after their defeat were allowed to settle north of the Rhine, under treaty with the Romans. Fifty years later, the Roman Empire had so much need of its legions to protect itself from the south, that the legions of the Rhine, like those of Britain, were withdrawn.

Upon that the Franks claimed, and took, their independence. Within another fifty years we find them established as far south as the River Somme. They had fought, as we have seen, with Romans and Visigoths against the Huns, the common enemy of them all, at Chalons, in 451. Only a few years later they were fighting with the Romans and against the Visigoths further south; but by 480 they asserted their independence, and the next year the famous Frankish King Clovis came to the throne, and under him the Franks took possession of nearly the whole of Gaul. He united all the tribes of the Franks under his sovereignty.

The only parts of Gaul which were not now under his rule were the kingdom of Burgundy, as it was called, after a German tribe, the Burgundi, coming from the east, like all the rest of them, and a piece of Provence, in the south, which is all that the Visigoths were able to retain on the north of the Pyrenees of their Kingdom of Toulouse.

Terrific and most picturesque warriors were these Franks, according to the accounts that we have of them, very tall men and strong, with long red or fair hair. For defence they had a wicker shield, light so that they could move it quickly. One of their chief weapons was the throwing axe, with which they were very accurate and expert. They had bows and arrows and a long spear. They wore breeches, close fitting, as far down as the knee, and a tunic that was belted about the waist with a broad leather girdle adorned with metalwork of iron and silver. Brooches kept it fastened.

Thus they came conquering; and they are to be

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remarked above all the rest of the conquering and invading barbarians, because they came to stay. Doubtless many of the others stayed also, but not as conquerors.

There is one other tribe of barbarian invaders for us to notice—the Lombards.

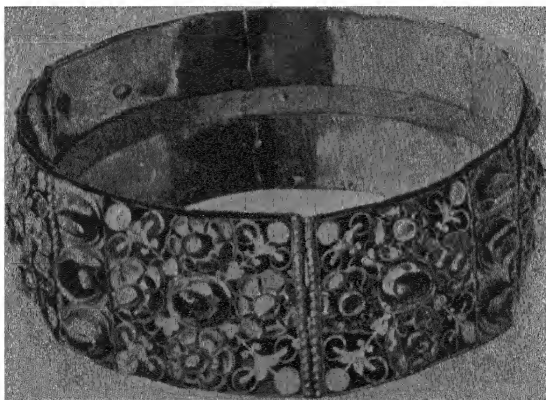
But I fear that you will be rather tired of all these different nations to whom I am introducing you. Their comings seem very confusing. It is difficult to remember which came before another and where they went and what they did. The biggest things done were, I suppose, first—though not first of all in point of time—that wonderful pilgrimage of the Vandals. That is perhaps the strangest story of all. Secondly, the invasion of the Visigoths, establishing their kingdom temporarily in South Gaul and more permanently in Spain, was really more important, because it was more lasting in the form that it gave to the great story. And then, thirdly, this Frankish dominion in Gaul is of great interest to us. It is the beginning of modern France.

But they are very puzzling—the comings and the vanishings. A friend of mine gave me what we call a *memoria technica*, to help me, and you, in remembering the order in which the different nations of the barbarians came in from the east. You know what a *memoria technica* is: some words easy to remember which recall to our minds something that we find difficult to remember. These words, as he gave them to me, are: “Visiting friends’ houses very often frankly laborious.”

Do you see what that means? I am afraid he must have found himself rather bored, at times, when his friends were doing their best to entertain him. He does not seem to have been as grateful as he should have been. But the suggestion of the words is as follows: “Visiting” is for Visigoths, who were the

first to come west, in any force ; then " friends " is for Franks—they came very early in the story of the barbarian invasions, but they came in much greater number later, as is indicated by the later " frankly." " Houses " is for those Huns, defeated at Chalons, " very," for the Vandals, " often " for the Ostrogoths, and " laborious " for the Lombards.

It is not quite perfect, because some of them came



THE IRON CROWN OF THE LOMBARDS.

The iron part of this crown, supposed to have been forged from one of the nails of the Cross, is the narrow circlet embedded in its interior.

and came again at different times. I believe that the Franks were really the first of all to break through the Roman wall of Empire ; but on the whole it roughly represents the order of their coming. It is easily remembered and is a great help.

Let us see now what it was that these latest comers, the Lombards, did, and who they were.

They were a tribe that lived up north of the

Visigoths and east of the Saxons and they were called Longo-bardi, long beards. They came last of all the Germanic tribes, for it is not till 568 that we hear of them in Italy, though they had drifted southward and had settled along the North of the Danube long before. But though the latest, they seem also to have been the rudest and least advanced of these tribes. They never became Romanised, as the others did, never learned any civilisation from the civilised people whom they conquered. But they came in great force and made their conquering way right down to the Tiber. They settled then and formed a kingdom in the North of Italy, more or less where Lombardy now is. They were still so powerful some two centuries later that we find them taking Ravenna, which was within the boundaries of the Eastern Empire and was a place of great importance with a fine harbour.

It was the increasing power and savage rapacity of the Lombards which led to an incident that was of the very greatest importance in the story. The Pope — and notice this particularly, for it is the very first time that we have had occasion to name him in our story—the Pope begged for help, against the Lombards, of the King of the Franks. And this assistance was given him, at first by Pepin and afterwards by Charlemagne—the greatest of all the Frankish kings—and the result of that assistance was that Charlemagne was triumphantly victorious and in 774 took to himself the title of King of the Lombards. The real result was that the Kingdom of Lombardy, in any independent sense, was at an end.

So now we may sum up these invasions of the various barbarian tribes and see what they amounted to and what effect they had on our story.

The Visigoths continued on in Spain until the Saracens and the Moors came to overthrow their Spanish kingdom in 710.

The Huns ceased, for some centuries, to be a danger to the West about 450, though at least a hundred years later they were a menace to Constantinople and the East, and even as late as 900 they were again threatening Northern Italy. The Vandals went out of the story, in the curious way that we have seen, in 533.

About 550 the Ostrogothic kingdom in North Italy was likewise ended.

Incidentally, we note that it was by the great Byzantine general Belisarius, that these last three were defeated and sent out of the story. None of the three left a very lasting impression on it, but that cannot be said of the Visigoths, who altered the way in which people lived both in Gaul and Spain very considerably. The Lombards' kingdom was swallowed up, as we saw, by Charlemagne, in 744. They, too, left little mark on the story.

There remain, however (and their kingdom does not, like that of the others, come to an end), the Franks. The others go, but the Franks stay. Charlemagne absorbs into his own domains many others besides those Lombards. He absorbs the Burgundians, the Saxons (this name had by now been transferred from those Northern Saxons who were sea-pirates and came to Britain, to a people occupying part of that territory in south-west Germany which is still called Saxony) and many besides.

With Charlemagne we come to the beginnings of Europe such as we know Europe now. But in order to see how Europe began at that time to seem something like the Europe that we know we must go back again to "the Eternal City," as it has been called—to Rome—and see what has been happening there, and especially what it is that has happened which has brought into being and into his great importance in the story that personage of whom we made our first mention only a page or two back—the Pope.

CHAPTER VIII

THE POPE

As Christianity spread through the world in the second and third centuries, churches, that is to say places in which the Christians assembled for worship, were established in many cities. In different parts of the Empire, as these parts were converted from paganism, overseers of the local churches were appointed and were called "episcopi," from a Greek word which is very literally translated by our word overseer. And our word "bishop" is formed from that word "episcopus." There was, of course, a bishop, an episcopus, at Rome.

If Jerusalem had not been, as we have seen that it was, so battered by war and so deserted by the inhabitants who were driven out of it, it is likely that Jerusalem would have been regarded as the chief Christian city, because Christ had taught and had suffered there. It was the centre and chief city of the religion on which Christianity was based and of that law which Christ Himself said that He came not to destroy but to fulfil. But Jerusalem itself was almost destroyed.

Rome was the chief city, the centre, of the Empire. At Rome, moreover, the apostle who did more than any other to spread Christianity among the Gentiles—that is to say, all over the world—St. Paul, had lived for some years, and had died.

Whether St. Peter ever came to Rome is still rather uncertain. The evidence is not clear. But the latest researches seem to make it probable that

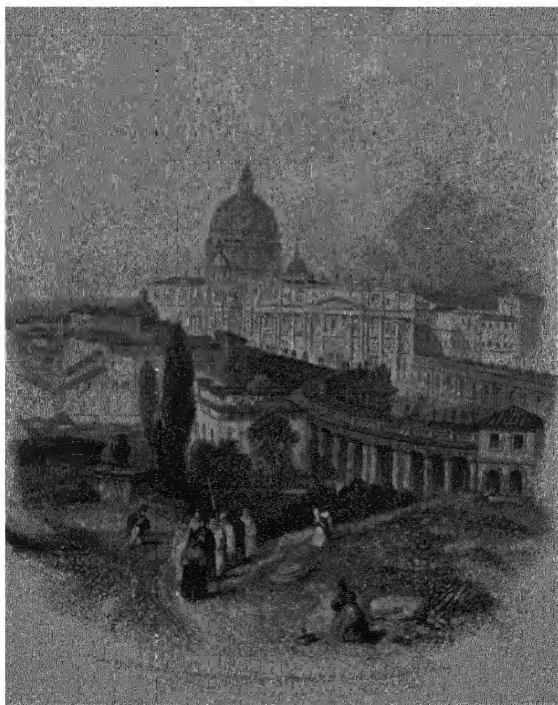
he did go to Rome, and perhaps died there, as a martyr. For we must remember that all through the first centuries Christianity had to fight its way against great opposition from those of the pagan religion. Besides the hatred of Christianity which some felt because it was a new religion, it incurred the hatred of the rulers because the Christians seemed to be setting up for themselves another ruler than the Roman Emperor. Even during Christ's life we know that the Christians in Judæa were suspected of enmity to the Emperor. The Pharisees laid a trap for Jesus by asking Him whether it was lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar. So the Christians often had to meet for worship in secret, and thousands of them were cruelly put to death.

Rome, then, because it was the centre of the Empire—which, for all Rome's subjects, meant the centre of the Universe—and also because it was the place where certainly St. Paul, and very probably St. Peter also, lived and died, became naturally the place to which the Christians throughout the Empire looked as the chief place in which their God was worshipped, and the place to which they would bring for decision any difficult questions and differences of opinion which the bishop of the district in which such debate arose could not settle for them. These districts were named "dioceses" from a very early date.

Thus the bishop of Rome came to have an authority above the others. And then the legend grew that to him St. Peter, who was supposed to be the keeper of the keys of the gate of Heaven, had bequeathed some, at least, of that authority which St. Peter himself had directly from Christ.

Thus it was, even before the Emperor Constantine confessed himself a Christian. You should observe that the Emperors themselves had been deemed to be in some degree divine, and

glory of gods, up to this time. Constantine, proclaiming Christianity as the State religion, gave up



ROME.

View of St. Peter's.

this claim to divinity for the Emperor. The time had not yet come when the Head of the Church—its

Father, Papa, or Pope—should actually confer the Imperial authority on the Emperor by consecration in the great cathedral built in Rome to St. Peter's glory. That time was not yet; but it was not so very far distant. It came, about the year 800, with the consecration of Charlemagne after he had destroyed the kingdom of the Lombards and taken their territories for his own.

After Constantine, the Emperor Julian tried to reverse this declaration of Constantine's and to bring back paganism. He was called Julian the Apostate, for so doing; and the chief interest of his attempt is that it shows how firm a hold Christianity already had taken, for the attempt failed utterly.

Certain circumstances seem to have combined to make the position of the Pope of Rome central and capital for all Christendom. For the good government of the Church there had been appointed by the early Christians five principal bishops, to each of whom was given the title of Patriarch. Patriarch means "arch," or chief (as in "archbishop" and "arch-angel") of a "patria," which is a family, or clan, from pater=father; and so Abraham and others were called patriarchs. This name, or title, was transferred to those who were chief among the bishops. The Patriarchates, or cities in which the Patriarchs had their headquarters, were these: Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria.

The third city, in size and importance, in the Roman Empire was Carthage; but Carthage, as you know, was taken by the Vandals, who were pagans; so the Bishop of Carthage could not be any rival of the Bishop of Rome. And just as the Vandals, who were heathens, removed one possible rival to the power of Rome in the Church, so did another, and very much more important, anti-Christian power remove some of the other rivals, the Patriarchs. This anti-Christian force was that wonderful Moslem or Mahomedan

power which rose up with marvellous swiftness in Arabia in the middle of the seventh century. The Saracens came surging up out of Arabia, into Palestine, where was the Jerusalem patriarchate, on to Asia Minor and the patriarchate of Antioch, westward into Egypt and the Alexandrian patriarchate. There remained then the Patriarch at Constantinople and the Patriarch, or Pope, at Rome.

Thus these two anti-Christian powers unconsciously fought the battle for the supremacy of the Pope.

Now you have seen how Odoacer, the barbarian, became King of Italy in 475, but did not claim to be Emperor: that made the way of the Pope's power more easy. And all through the fourth century—that is from 300 to 400, to speak in “round figures,” as we say—the Emperor of the West had his court, not at Rome, but at Milan, in the North of Italy. Just after 400 the Western Emperor moved his court to Ravenna, though it was actually within the bounds of the Eastern Empire. The power, however, that went with the high-sounding title of Western Emperor was not great, at this time, until the days of Charlemagne, when it became attached to the Franks' kingdom, and by that time the position of the Pope of Rome was so high and so firmly set that we find Charlemagne himself being consecrated and anointed as Emperor by the Pope.

But before this date another very extraordinary thing in the story of the Church had occurred. Christianity had been introduced into some of the northern parts of what is now Germany; and the way by which it had come was not, as you would expect, straight up from Rome, but it had come in from the west, from England, and into England it had been brought from the west again—from Ireland.

How that came to pass I will try to tell you in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IX

HOW ENGLAND BECAME CHRISTIAN

ALL Europe, we may say, west and south of the Rhine and of the Danube, had become Christian before the barbarians broke through the wall. And when we say "all Europe," it includes even Ireland, out in the north-west. When the Angles and the Saxons came invading Britain and driving the Britons westward, they destroyed Christianity and brought in their own northern religion with its gods, Odin, god of War, and Thor, god of the Hammer, and the rest of them. But their invasion and their disturbance never reached as far west as Ireland. There, the Christian religion continued, while it was destroyed in England.

The Anglo-Saxon conquerors were constantly fighting with each other, as well as with the Britons, in England. The three big kingdoms of these Anglo-Saxons were Northumbria, in the north; Wessex, in the south-east and stretching westward along the southern part of England; and Mercia, between the two. These fought with varying success, and somewhere about 600 came an invasion into Kent of a tribe closely allied to the Angles and the Saxons, and actually included sometimes under either of these names—the Jutes, from the northern end of that Sleswig peninsula from which they all came. They landed in Kent, and perhaps because they were so close of kin with the conquerors already there,

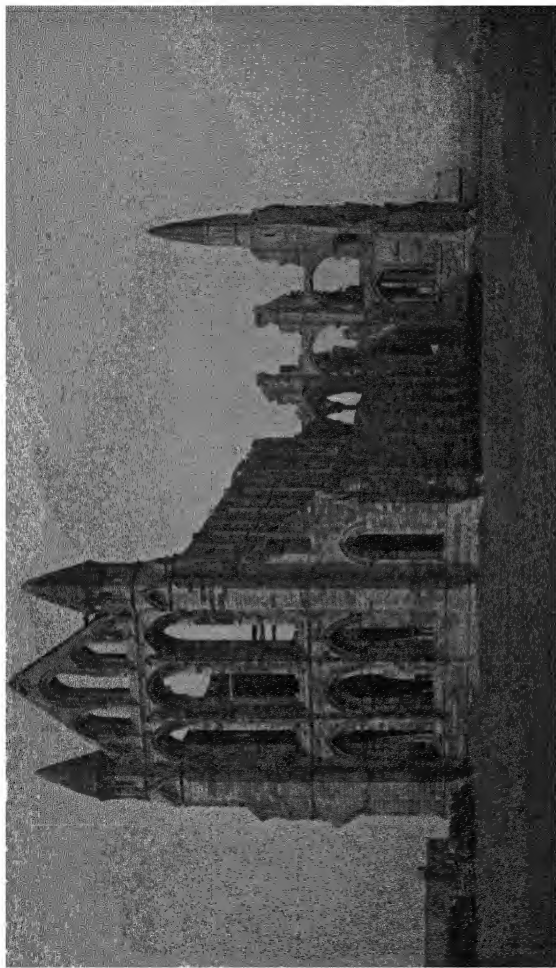


Photo by F. M. Sutcliffe.]

WHITBY ABBEY.

[Whitby.]

or perhaps because they came in very great force, it was a Jute king who soon became master of all the east of England from the south of Kent as far north as the Wash. And one of his first acts of importance, as king of all this country, was to ask, and to receive, as his wife, the daughter of the King of the Franks. The Franks by that time were masters of Gaul.

You see what the effect of that was—to bring England and the Continent of Europe together, into close relations with each other. They had been thus close together under the Romans, but the intercourse had been severed by the barbarians. Now it was resumed; and the Pope of Rome took advantage of it at once. The Franks were Christians. The Frank king's daughter, whom the Jute king of East Anglia had married, was a Christian. The Pope sent St. Augustine into Kent to preach Christianity; and he was so successful, as a missionary, that Christianity was admitted by the East Anglian king and by his people generally. Thence it made its way again into Northumbria.

So that seems entirely to contradict what I told you at the end of the last chapter, about Christianity being brought back into England, and so to some of the northern parts of Europe, not from Rome, but from Ireland.

The explanation of that apparent contradiction is that this conversion which was brought about by St. Augustine was not lasting. The Mercians, who had been tributary, that is had paid tribute, to the Northumbrian king, allied themselves with the Britons of Wales and claimed independence. Their king Penda was the last of the great champions in England of the heathen gods, and his long reign was a continuous struggle against the new religion. By 650 he had defeated all his rivals except the

Northumbrians. Northumbria still held out against him, but St. Augustine's envoy, who had brought Christianity again to Northumbria, had departed after a victory gained by Penda over the Northumbrian king. Even in the south people relapsed in numbers into heathenism. The zeal for Christianity was kept alive in the north by influences that had come in through Ireland.

From the Irish churches, untroubled by the incursion of barbarians, missionaries had come westward. A famous monastery had been established on the island of Iona, off the west coast of Scotland. Thence the missionary monks had passed on into Scotland, still, at that time, called Caledonia and inhabited by the people called Picts. They had passed, too, across the northern part of England and had settled on the island which even now is called Holy Island, off the east coast of Northumberland. That was the centre from which the new King of Northumbria and his people were inspired with a zeal for the Christian religion which made them continue the struggle against the Mercian king whose lordship was at this time acknowledged over most of the rest of Britain. Oswi, the Northumbrian king, had received some of his education at the monastery of Iona. In 655 he met and utterly defeated the Mercian forces, under the aged king Penda, near the modern town of Leeds.

That battle gave heathenism in England its death-blow, and the inspiration for that blow had come from the Irish Church. But then, England being thus again united to Rome by religion, and its intercourse with Gaul renewed, the envoys of Rome reappeared, and pleaded for the supremacy of the Pope of Rome over the English. The Irish Church differed in opinion from the Pope of Rome, as we are told, about the date at which Easter should be kept

and about the fashion in which the priests' heads should be shaved. The English Christians had to adopt the one opinion or the other, and Oswi, the Christian champion, summoned a great meeting, called a Synod, at Whitby, to settle which of the two England should follow. The envoys of the two claimant Churches, the Romish and the Irish, pleaded the case before him, and it is asserted that he gave his decision in favour of Rome on being told that St. Peter was both the founder of the Romish Church and also that he held the key of the gate of Heaven. Oswi feared that he might offend St. Peter if he declared for Ireland rather than for Rome, and that St. Peter in consequence might not admit him through the heavenly gate. Thus England passed again under the spiritual rule of the Pope, and the Irish monks left their monastery on the Holy Island. But, both before and after this, some of them travelled into Northern Europe and preached Christianity among the German tribes, even so far north and west as the southern shores of the Baltic where the most numerous and most powerful people were the Frisians.

They do not enter very importantly into the making of the great story, but they were a great force along that Baltic coast. Very occasionally we find the name Frisians used for all those who were much more commonly called Saxons, and it is possible that they were of the same original stock ; but that is a question which we need not try to settle.

In this manner, then, it was determined for England that she should be Christian, and no longer heathen ; and it was determined also that she should follow the Romish way, in strict obedience to the Pope of Rome, rather than the Irish. But though all the English kingdoms became Christian, that religion common to them all did not for very long bring them at peace together. For the whole length of another century

they were fighting among themselves, now one and now the other having the advantage, but never so decisively that any one of them could call himself king of all the English, or of England.

All this while the Frank kings were very powerful in Gaul, and though they never seem to have had any idea of attempting the conquest of Britain, they kept their eyes attentively fixed on what went on there; and their purpose seems to have been to keep the country in a state of division and disturbance. This they did by helping, or at least by promising to help, the one that was the weakest.

Thus affairs went in Britain down to the time of the great King Pepin, of the Franks, and again, after him, of his yet greater son Charles, who was known as Charlemagne, or Charles the Great—that is to say until about the year 800. And at about that time there came down upon the English the invasion of another nation of sea-rovers like themselves—the Danes.

All this while, too, the power of the Pope of Rome had been increasing, by no means at a steady rate of progress, but at times gaining greatly and at others losing, but on the whole going forward like the incoming tide.

Doubtless the fact that the Western Empire no longer looked on Rome as its capital city, gave the Bishop of Rome opportunity for increased power. So long as Rome was the home of the Emperor and his court, there was a greater and more powerful person in Rome than its bishop. But the Emperor, as we saw, removed his court to Milan and, later, to Ravenna. That left the Pope as certainly one of the chief men, if not absolutely chief, in Rome. We have also seen that about halfway through the seventh century—that is, about 650—the Saracens had turned out from their seats three of the five

patriarchs of the Church, namely those of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch. There remained the Patriarch at Constantinople and the Patriarch, the Pope, at Rome. The regulation of religious matters in the Eastern Empire fell naturally therefore to the former and the latter became head of the Church throughout the Western Empire.

The authority of the Pope depended largely on the belief that when Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, made Constantinople the seat of his power, he gave, or donated, to the Bishop of Rome his authority over all the Western Empire. This "donation of Constantine" became very famous. It is generally thought that the deed, that is to say the parchment with the words on it which were supposed to make the gift good, was all made up—that the signature was a forgery, and the whole story of the donation an invention. But if it was so, it was an invention which had a great effect. It helped the Pope to establish his supremacy over all the churches in the West.

Nevertheless it seems that when there was trouble in any of the churches of Spain, where the Visigothic kingdom was established, the trouble used to be referred for decision to the capital city of that kingdom. Likewise in France, trouble in any of the Frankish churches was settled, if possible, by bringing the case up before the bishop in the capital of the Franks. But, for all that, both Visigoths and Franks looked on Rome, the city of St. Paul and St. Peter, as a place—we might say as the place—especially sacred and its bishop as a personage holding an authority superior to all others in Christendom. The feeling was the same in those churches yet farther from the Roman centre, the churches of Germany and of England.

The Western Empire, we have to realise, was no

longer Roman ; it was Frankish. Rome itself was included within the Empire of which the Emperor was Charlemagne. It was the Pope, you may remember, who had called in the aid of the Frankish, or French, kings—first Pepin and then Charlemagne—to aid him against the Lombards. They had given such effectual aid that the Lombard kingdom was overthrown and Charlemagne himself was crowned with the Iron Crown which was the sign of the Lombard monarchy.

The name of Lombardy remained, and remains to this day, as that of a part of Northern Italy. It remains also in our Lombard Street, in London. This was so called from the Lombard merchants and goldsmiths and bankers who came thither from Lombardy. The arms of Lombardy were three balls, and you may sometimes see three balls now as a sign over the door of a pawnbroker's shop. The first banking operations of the Lombards in London were very like modern pawnbroking ; for they would lend money to people who gave them security for its repayment by handing over jewels or golden chains or ornaments. Thus curiously is the richest street, as it has been reckoned, in the richest city in the world, called after those long-bearded barbarians, of unusually savage manners, who came away from somewhere near where the Elbe goes out into the sea and who founded a kingdom for a while in Italy. A strange story which you may recall whenever you see that sign of the three golden balls.

After the fall of Lombardy the Empire of Charlemagne included not only all Gaul, which had come to him by succession from Pepin, but also what we may describe as all Germany, and Italy as far down as the Tiber and southward of it again. The Pyrenees had for years formed the boundary between the Frankish Empire and the Visigoths' kingdoms. The

Emperor would have had no authority over the Goths, had they still been there in 800 or so; but in the early half of the eighth century, beginning as early in that century as 710, that Visigothic kingdom had begun to go to pieces under the attacks of the fierce Arabs, inspired by the fighting religion of Mahomet, who in course of the previous century had fought their way to the mastery of Asia Minor and of Egypt.

They came, working eastward along that strip of Africa fringing the Mediterranean, along which we saw the Vandals working westward. And just as the Vandals, who conquered all that African strip, were invited into Africa, from Spain, in order to help the master, as he then was, of that Africa against his enemies, so now these Saracens and Moors were invited, in the early part of the eighth century, into Spain, from Africa, to help one of the rival parties who were disputing about the succession to the throne. They, like the Vandals, stayed a good deal longer than their hosts had intended, and with a far different position in the country than those hosts had designed for them. But they were a people so important in the making of this greatest of great stories that we must give them a new chapter to themselves and to their own particular story.

CHAPTER X

THE SARACENS

BOTH the name Saracen and the name Moor came to be used in a sense much wider than their first significance. At first the Romans knew as "Saraceni," a single tribe of Arabs living near Mount Sinai. Later, the name Saracen was used by Europeans to mean any followers of the religion of Mahomet. Moors, "Mauri" or "dark men," was a name at first used only for a tribe that was also called Berbers, living along the northern edge of the Sahara desert, in Africa. But they were not of black skin, like the negroes, nor had they woolly hair. Their complexion was darkened only by the sun's burning power, and their hair was smooth. There were many of them in the forces that invaded Spain and put an end to the Visigoths' kingdom there early in the eighth century; and after a time all the Moslems, or Mahommedans, in Spain came to be known as Moors.

The story of the rise of Mahomet and the spread of the religion that he preached and the success of the armies by whose victories it was so dispersed is one of the most wonderful, perhaps it is actually the most astonishing, of all those that go to make up the great story.

The maker and preacher of the religion that we call, after him, Mahommedanism, or Mohammedanism, began his preaching early in the seventh century. He was a poor man, of no eminent family in Arabia. Arabia had already come under Jewish influence in some parts, and under Christian influence in others. Mahomet took the Bible as the basis of his preaching, but it seems that he did not understand it very well,

and he placed his own interpretation on much of it. He supposed himself to be the prophet, or apostle, chosen by the only God, whom he called Allah, to preach the true religion to the Arabians.

Abraham, as we saw in the first volume of this great story, was patriarch, or head, of a clan that came up out of the desert at first to Ur of the Chaldees. Mahomet seems to have claimed to preach the religion of Abraham. Moreover, there was a tradition that the Arabians were descended from that Ishmael of whom the Bible tells us, the son of Hagar, sent out into the wilderness, "whose hand was against every man and every man's hand against him." If we accept this story we shall perhaps wonder less that Mahomedanism was such a martial, such a fighting religion. Mahomet preached that its followers should fight to carry it over all the world.

You are not to understand from this, however, that it was a religion which set out to make proselytes, as we call them; that is, to convert others to the same way of thinking. In later days we shall find that the Saracens were not very eager that the Christians of the countries that they conquered should become Mahomedans, because it was their custom to tax, at a certain sum, every one not of their religion. They seem to have looked on this financial side of the affair as being of more importance to them than any salvation of the Christian people's souls.

But at the beginning of his preaching—or prophesying—Mahomet had hard work to make his doctrine accepted, and himself acknowledged as the prophet of the one and only God, even among his own people. He had to fly from his native city of Mecca to the neighbouring Medina. After a while he found supporters there, and by degrees they became so many that he was able to go back and take Mecca. Then, again by degrees, he was joined by so many of the

Arabian tribes that he was able to send armies beyond the bounds of Arabia, into Syria northward. They suffered defeat and check at times ; but on the whole they were extraordinarily victorious.

For their success there were several causes, all quite easy to understand. They were a hardy people, accustomed to meagre fare and to hard living in the desert. They were very fine horsemen. The religion which their prophet preached to them promised untold joys in Paradise for those who died fighting against the enemies of Islam. (Islam was the prophet's name for the faith which he preached.) An intense belief in this happy future, after death, made them fearless in battle. Then they were a very poor people, and those against whom Mahomet sent them were far richer, and to the Moslem soldier loot from the enemy never was forbidden. They seem to have had a certain sense that some justice and mercy were due to the conquered, for the rule was that only four-fifths of the loot taken became the property of the conquerors. The conquered were left with a fifth.

And most of those against whom they went at first were weak, owing to lack of discipline and absence of strong government. The forces of the Eastern Empire in Asia Minor and of the Persians had been weakened by continuous fighting against each other. Syria had been so hammered between the two that it had little strength of its own. Egypt was feebly held. But it was not till after the death of the prophet that the armies carried the green flag of Islam east and west ; and for a while after his death the succession to his religious leadership was much disputed.

It may occur to you to ask what need there was for a successor to such a position as that of Mahomet. He had preached his gospel. He had laid down the laws that were to be followed. Was not that enough ? Why did he need a successor ?

The explanation is that while Mahomet was a great preacher, or prophet, he also held a position of leadership over the Arabs which we have no one word to express. Perhaps it can be stated best by saying simply that the Arabs did what he told them to do. It also looks as if he was wise enough to tell them to do things that they were not likely to object to doing. I suppose we may state that he was a ruler with the limits of his authority not very clearly defined. But his influence was very powerful, because he gave out, and probably believed, that whatever he told the people was put into his mouth by Allah, the only God, whose prophet he claimed to be.

This "only God" was a phrase that was often repeated by the Mahommedans in opposition to the "Trinity" of the Christians, to whom the Deity was revealed as being "three Persons and one God."

Therefore, if Mahomet had died without a successor to an authority in some part like his own, the people would have been quite at a loss for a guide and ruler. He was in fact succeeded by "caliphs," as they were, and as they still are, called, the word caliph actually meaning "successor" or "representative." The caliphs were supposed to be "representative" of Mahomet, to succeed to some of his authority, rather as the Popes of Rome were deemed to succeed to and be representative of the authority of St. Peter. They did not pretend to receive messages from Allah, as Mahomet had received them, but they would uphold the teaching of Mahomet; and their explanations of doubtful points in his teaching were likely to be accepted by all Mahommedans. And although they were not held in the same honour as Mahomet, they were regarded as rulers of the nation whom all men should obey for the sake of their good fortune both in this world and in the next.

Now, in Syria and in Asia Minor generally, the

population was probably far more nearly akin to the Arabians than to the Romans or the Greeks. It was from Arabia that the Semitic tribes had come into the country westward from the Euphrates and the Tigris and thence had spread over Syria and Palestine. The Saracens had little difficulty with them. The Persians had a stronger feeling of nationality and made more resistance, but before the middle of the seventh century Persia too was conquered.

The way of fighting of those early Arabian conquerors was to come sweeping down in cavalry charges on the enemy. Their weapons were the spear and the curved sword, called scimitar, with which they used to smite as they galloped. They were very quick in movement, and if they had a reverse they could withdraw and disappear over the desert so swiftly that it was almost impossible to deal them any really severe blows.

As they conquered lands where different methods of fighting were in use, they learned to adopt those that would be of value to them, but always their chief reliance was on the quick movement of their cavalry and on the cavalry charge, with the spear and scimitar ; and even when they put on any defensive armour in addition to a light shield, it was of a fine mail, or steel network, only. It did not add greatly to their weight on horseback. The steel work of Damascus, the capital of Syria, and the edge that was set on the sword-blades of that steel work, became famous very early.

They used the bow but little until the time when the Turk came into the story ; but he is not there yet.

Perhaps the most wonderful testimony to the intelligence and enterprise of these children of the desert is that they fought a great and successful naval battle with the fleet of the Eastern Empire as early as 655. The Emperor himself was in command of the defeated fleet. In all likelihood most of the victors

were seamen of the Syrian coast who had become Mahommedans.

In one particular the rise of the Moslem power in Arabia, and its northward and eastward expansion, were possibly more of a relief to the Emperor at Constantinople than a menace. The Persians had continually been threatening and giving trouble on his eastern border. The Saracens attacked the Persians and within a very few years completely conquered them so that the Persians troubled the Empire no more. The Saracens seized Irak, which was the most beautiful and richest province of all Persia. They pushed further east, still conquering, into India, Tibet, and even to the borders of China.

This was the first direction of their expansion, but almost at the same time they gained, easily, possession of Egypt, and then proceeded westward along that fertile strip of Northern Africa between the Mediterranean and the Sahara desert. Here they encountered, conquered, and converted to Mahommedanism that tribe of Berbers who were called the Moors, as I told you, and who were the conquerors of Spain.

It was in 710, less than a hundred years after Mahomet became a power in his native Arabia, that they went over into Spain to help the King of the Visigoths, or one of the claimants to the Visigothic throne, against his rival.

The Gothic power was broken by these dissensions, and the conquerors had no great trouble in making good their conquest over the whole of Spain, always excepting those strong mountainous places in the Pyrenees where the Basques still live—a different people from any that have entered Spain within the knowledge of our historical records. Perhaps they are of the same race as the Celts—either as the Brythons or as that older branch called Goidels—of whom

a remnant held out in Wales, Ireland, Cornwall, and Brittany.

The Saracens had this advantage—call it luck, if you please—that they came upon enemies whose government was weak, who were not united or brought together by any feeling of patriotism or love of their country or nation. The Roman soldiers, at the time when the legions were made up of free citizens who owned land, had been able to feel that they were fighting for their own property. But all that feeling had long passed from the armies of the seventh and eighth centuries. The Saracens had, in their religion, a sentiment which gave them union, and inspired them with the idea that they were all fighting for the same cause. We have seen how the prospect of joy in Paradise, if they should die in battle, gave them courage. Therefore, when we take these facts into consideration, their quick and extensive victories do not appear so incredible. Their hordes must have seemed almost invincible to the greatly alarmed people of Europe as they went so easily through Spain; but when they pushed up through the Pyrenees and came against a really strong and well-governed people in the Franks they made no further way; they were defeated. They were rolled back again across the Pyrenees and left to make good their Empire in Spain.

They had this sentiment and inspiration common to them all—their fighting religion; but the caliphs of Mahomet never showed any of that power of organisation, any of that capacity for governing a great empire from a single centre, which had been so remarkable in the Romans during the first hundred years or so after the birth of Christ. The capital, or chief place of residence of the caliphs, became, after a while, Bagdad, on the Euphrates. It was more central and convenient, no doubt, than a city in the Arabian desert. But, first of all, the ruler of the

African province tried to assert himself as independent of the caliph ; then the ruler of Spain, more distant still from the centre, claimed independence more strongly and successfully ; and so it was also with other provinces in the circumference of the wide and constantly widening Empire. The links, as we say, of the Empire chain were not very solid or strong. But there was always this in common, to help keep all together—their religion. If the caliph in Bagdad had little or no control over the doings of the Moorish ruler of Spain, if the latter made war and peace and so on as seemed good to him without referring for orders to headquarters, the caliph still had some influence over him and his followers in religious matters, as being the representative and successor of Mahomet, who was Allah's prophet.

It was very like the power which the Roman Church, with the Pope at its head, had over the Christians. The Roman Empire, in a military sense, and in the sense of having Rome as the centre of its government and laws, had gone to pieces. There was no more "appealing unto Cæsar," or to any authority at Rome, from the decision of a court of law in some far-off province—as St. Paul appealed at Cæsarea—but still the Pope had his far-reaching power. The officials of government had gone from the cities of Gaul or of Britain or wherever it might be ; but the clergy remained, and grew more and more in number, and the authority of the Pope of Rome—or even of the Pope from Avignon or Ravenna, for sometimes, as we shall see, he was obliged to fly from Rome—had its power over these clergy and through them over the laity. Ever since Constantine had made Christianity the State religion they had been servants and officials, in this manner, of the dying Empire and of the growing Church. The caliph's power was a like power, because he was the successor of Mahomet, though it

was never, in its spiritual influence, of equal power with that of the successor of St. Peter. But the two may be compared, and the comparison is very interesting.

So now we have brought the story to a point when we may very well pause a moment and take a look at the map, to see how things have been arranging themselves—to ask ourselves “Who’s who?” in A.D. 800 and “Who has what?” It is on Christmas Day of that year that the mighty Charlemagne, the greatest king of the Franks, is consecrated Emperor by the Pope at Rome. That fact in itself tells a story.

But as for the world map of that time, you will remember how it was with our England, that the Anglo-Saxons, or one or other of those tribes from Jutland, held all the east; that the boundaries of Wessex went far west, where England is at its broadest; that Mercia was the Middle England, and that in the north was Northumbria, which went up to the southern limits of the Picts and Scots in Caledonia. The West Country, as we call it now, and Wales and the West of Cumberland, as well as Ireland, were still in the hands of the Celts.

There were Celts too on the Continent, in Brittany, and in parts of Spain.

Spain itself, with little exception, was held by the Moors, but of course the Gothic and Roman population, whom the conquering Moors found there, still remained there too. The Saracens also had all that Northern African strip as far east as Libya and Egypt. They had Egypt itself, Palestine, Syria and away to the east into India and so out of our picture. In Asia Minor they kept up a continual contest for many years with the Eastern Empire.

That Eastern Empire itself has become a poor possession in comparison with its extent at the date of the Roman Empire’s division. It has a hold on the extreme South of Italy and it also claims the islands

of Sardinia, Sicily, and of the Ægean Sea. It holds Asia Minor as far south as the borders of Mesopotamia and northwards to the Black Sea ; but in those regions it is continually menaced by the Saracens. What we now call Turkey in Europe is within the Empire, and also the greater part of Thrace. It retains Greece ; but of Macedonia it has scarcely any grip. Various barbarian tribes, Slavs, Serbs, Bulgars, have possession of the country up to the Danube.

And as for the rest of the map, all that matters, all that does not belong to the north-eastern barbarians, falls into the Empire of Charlemagne. Pepin, King of the Franks before Charlemagne, had all that we call France and further had our Switzerland, Bavaria and, in the north, the present Holland and Belgium. He also was king of considerable territory east of the Rhine. But under Charlemagne those large possessions were very largely increased, eastward, and northward, and southward. Southward he held Italy right down to Naples. Eastward he had all the old Roman province of Illyricum ; that is to say that his sovereignty extended to the Danube. Northward of the Danube, where that great river makes its southward bend, he held Bohemia. He had the land of the



Saxons up to and beyond the Elbe. He ruled over Denmark and the south of Scandinavia.

The whole of the centre of the picture, in fact, is included in this Carolingian Empire, as it was called, from Carolus, the Latin form of Charles. And Charlemagne had been consecrated Emperor by the Pope at Rome. The Visigoths had been Christians, but they had not been orthodox Christians according to the opinion of the Church of Rome. They had been Arians; that is, followers of what the Roman Church considered the wrong and heretical opinion of a certain bishop called Arius. The Roman Church and the Pope of Rome could not have used the clergy of the Visigoths as their agents; the Pope could not have acted through such agents or worked with them. But he did, and he could, act through the Frankish clergy; and you see over how large a space of the world he could thus act and make his power felt.

In the Eastern Empire the Patriarch at Constantinople was the head of the Christian power. The Pope's authority did not extend there. Neither had it authority in Spain under the Mahommedan Moors. Indeed a large number of the Romans and Goths in Spain became Mahommedans, in order to enjoy the privileges and the lighter taxes which the Moslems imposed on Mahommedans. But the Pope had this very strong position as the head of the Church all over Charlemagne's Empire and beyond—for he was obeyed in Britain and in Ireland.

The great Empire of the great Charlemagne was not fated to last very long, as you will see; but it had served to help in establishing over all the central part of Europe the authority of the Church at Rome; and when it broke up, that authority was still maintained over the broken pieces of the Empire, no matter under what king they fell. Charlemagne repaid the Pope well for his consecration at Rome on Christmas Day of the year 800.

CHAPTER XI

THE FRANKS AND THE FEUDAL SYSTEM

Now, since the Franks occupied, for a while, so large an Empire, and were the principal people to establish the Pope's power, let us see what they did over this extent of Empire, what they made of it, what it became under them.

For the most part, we must realise they came into territory, as they moved westward, which had been conquered by the Romans and which had again been conquered, from the Romans, by barbarians of the Gothic tribes. So the Franks found a population partly Roman and partly Gothic there, when they came. They found Roman laws as the principal laws of the country, slightly altered, no doubt, by the Gothic customs, but much as the Romans had established them. They found cities built in the Roman way—that is, within a square of walls, with a gate in the centre of each wall and streets running straight through from one gate to the other opposite to it. That was the usual plan of the Roman cities, if the ground allowed of their building in this way; and the roads went on through the surrounding country, from one city to another, very straight, very well made, turning as little as possible to right or left, and only turning this little when a mountain over which, or a river through which, it was impossible to carry the road came in the way.

The Frankish tribes which penetrated into Gaul

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from time to time—themselves, probably, pushed westward by the Huns who came from further east again—were divided into two great groups, the Ripuarian Franks and the Salian Franks. The name Ripuarian was given to the tribes who settled along the “ripa,” which is the Latin word for “bank,” of the Rhine. The name Salian, of the other great group, as we have seen already, is of doubtful origin, perhaps from the “saline” or “salt” sea; because this group came from the shores of the Baltic.

For a long time Franks kept pushing in from the East through the Empire’s wall. There were Franks with the Gothic and Roman army that defeated Attila at Chalons in the middle of the fifth century. The Salians seem to have been the latest of the Franks to come in, but they became so strong that they dominated all the rest.

I have spoken of those great kings of the Franks, Pepin and Charlemagne, but the king under whom the big work was done of bringing all the Frankish tribes, and indeed all Gaul, under one authority, and giving them that union which means strength—that king was earlier than either of these. His name was Clovis.

He became king of the Salian Franks in 481. The kings of his dynasty were called Merovingian, from Merovig, an old chieftain. He made himself master of the whole of Gaul, except of what was then called Burgundy and Provence, in the south. But you should know that this name Burgundy, derived from that of one of the Gothic tribes, was made to cover very different territories, under rulers of different races, at different times in our story.

So here was this King Clovis of the Franks ruling over this large Empire. He found the Roman law and the Roman system of government in use there; and the Franks adopted as much as they could of the Roman customs into their own. But it was difficult.

The Roman official who had represented the government of the Empire was called the "comes," or "count," and the Merovingian kings of the Franks seem to have tried to continue to govern through the "count." One of his duties was to collect taxes, but the Franks do not seem to have understood taxation as it was understood by the Romans. The Romans made assessment, that is to say calculations, from time to time, to find out how much money was needed for the government of a province, and they exacted from the people of the province as much as was required to meet that need. Under the Franks the tax came to be a fixed amount on property.

The duty of the Count in levying the tax cannot have been easy, for these Franks were one and all fighting men. In their own country the practice had been to hold an assembly of the tribe for the making of laws and judging cases. That was their idea of government. It was a plan which might work well for a small tribe. It was not suitable for a large empire.

The consequence is that we soon see the Count, and other men of rank and of large possessions in land, becoming more and more independent of the king, who really could not make his authority felt. One of the difficulties that the king found, arose from the custom, which was a Roman custom, of granting "immunities," as they were called, to certain persons and institutions. They were granted especially to institutions connected with the Church. They provided that the lands to which they were given should be "immune from" visits by the king's officials. The great man, or the great institution, to whom or to which the immunity was granted thus became like a small king, within his own kingdom. He could do almost as he pleased.

So there was always this trouble, and it grew greater as time went on, that the king's authority

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was more and more disputed, more and more weakened; and in this weakening of authority the security for life and for property grew weaker. The poorer people found that their best hope for a secure life was to put themselves under the protection of some rich and powerful man; that rich and powerful man found that his best hope for safety was to take under his protection as many as possible of these people, who, in return for the protection, would fight for him on occasion.

And this, shortly put, was, in the main, what brought about the state of society known as the feudal system.

It was the more easy for the lesser men, the vassals, and the great man, the lord, to make these terms with each other, because something of the kind was already in existence, both in the Germany from which the Franks came and in the Roman and Gothic society into which they had come as conquerors.

The name given to the assembling of men of less power and wealth around the greater men had been "comitatus," in Germany. In Rome it had been the custom for a prominent citizen to have a troop of "clientes," or clients, men of the people who came to him to ask him for advice about any legal claims that they were making, or any injustice under which they were suffering. They would receive his advice, and perhaps he would speak for them when their case came before the court. In return, these clients would support their patron, as the great man was called, with their votes whenever they could be of use to him, and they would even accompany him about the city, in times of disturbance, as a kind of bodyguard.

The Frankish kings, we may note, had a bodyguard for their special protection, and this bodyguard was held in very high estimation, so much so that if one of them were killed the killer, or his relations, had

to pay a penalty three times as heavy as they would have had to pay for the killing of any other free man.

So the service of the vassal to his feudal lord was only an extension of the kind of service that the client did for the patron; and so too the service of protection that the lord gave to the vassal might easily grow out of the protection and help given by the patron to the client.

And then there was another custom common in the Roman and Gothic society which helped to form the relationship between the vassal and the feudal lord. If a free man were landless he was in a very poor position. It was beneath his dignity to serve as a slave, or even as a "villein," which was a position in society between that of a slave and a free man. But if he were without land, he had no means of livelihood; and as his life was of no value to anyone he had no one to defend him. Therefore it had become usual for these landless free men to come to some large landowner and offer him to do him certain service if he would grant, or lend, them a piece of land, or possibly the use of a mill—a water-mill for grinding corn—or some other grant out of which they might get a livelihood. If this were granted them, they would give their service and help to the lord. The Latin word for "to pray" is "precari," and so this relationship between the lord and the tenant was called "precarium," because the tenant had "prayed" the lord for it. I have called it a "grant, or loan." It was not a gift, because the lord might take it back at any time, and so end the tenancy, nor could the tenant pass on his right in the land, or whatever it might be, to his heirs. If the lord did allow it to go on to these heirs, they would probably have to pay him some "fine," before they succeeded to it, as well as undertaking to continue the service which the first tenant, when the grant was made, had promised.

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So herein, that it could be taken back by the lord, it was like a loan ; and yet it differed from a loan in this —that there was no idea in the mind of either the lord or the tenant that it was likely to be taken back. It was intended to be a permanent loan, if we may use that expression, but still it was recognised on both sides that the lord or the lord's successors had the power at any moment of taking it back, if he or they pleased, from the tenant and the tenant's successors. You must have heard the expression "a precarious possession," or something of the kind. You may now know how that expression arose. The word "precarious" is, of course, from this "precarium," which is derived from the Latin word for "to pray."

You will find that these two ideas, that of the relation between the patron and client, and that between the landlord and the "precarious" tenant, helped to form the foundations, the roots, from which the feudal system grew up. The land or the mill was the fee, or fief (fief was the French form of the word) in return for holding which the holder owed service to the lord.

Just what he should do for the lord, by way of service, differed in different places at first, and was determined by the different customs of each place ; but as time went on the duties began to be defined, or laid down, more exactly, and grew to be very much the same wherever the system prevailed. The vassal had to follow his lord to war when called on, he had to serve as a defender when the lord was attacked, he was liable to have to contribute to the dowry of the lord's daughter when she was married and to his lord's ransom if he should be taken prisoner by the enemy. He had to follow the lord to battle armed at his own cost, perhaps mounted, perhaps with some of his villeins following him.

You can realise that when the country was in a

very disturbed state, so that the king's authority could not easily and quickly be enforced, the lord who had many of these tenants or vassals could do very much as he pleased on his own territories. You will also realise that when men could no longer get justice from the central authority, which the king represented, they were only too grateful to get it from their feudal lord.

And the condition of Gaul under the Franks began to be a condition of general disturbance after the death of the great King Clovis. He died in 511 and he left his kingdom divided between his four sons. The youngest of these sons, by name Clotaire, lived longer than any of his brothers, but on his death, in 561, he in turn left four sons, and again there was division of the kingdom, claims were made by one and were resisted by another. There was continual civil war. Yet again, a few years later, there were new divisions amongst the children of one or other of these, and so it went until the kingdom was once more united, after 613, by the death or defeat of his rivals, under Clotaire II. Clotaire was nominally sovereign, yet still there were the subordinate kingdoms, each claiming some independence.

But during this century, when the Frankish conquerors were fighting with each other, the general condition of society had been altered. We have seen how the large landowners began drawing to themselves a body of vassals, and how they gradually became more independent of the king's authority. We have to notice at the same time that the power of the Church, in the hands of its bishops, was continually growing greater. The Church was constantly being enriched by donations of land given it by pious persons who deemed that they might find salvation by these gifts; and what made the Church the more powerful was the above-mentioned custom of granting "immunities."

The "immunities" were granted by the Crown, in

return for some service done, or by way of payment of a debt, or as an act of mere friendliness; and the meaning of the "immunity" was that the land in respect of which it was granted was "immune" from the king's tax collectors or law officers. The Crown officials could not enter on it. The taxes were collected and the law administered by persons acting for the landowner. You see how this again would work towards making the great landowners independent of the Crown. And these "immunities" were largely given to the bishops in respect of the Church lands. The bishops thus grew to great independence and power, and they worked continually to have their own people, the subordinate clergy, subject to their own laws, the laws of the Church, and not to the laws of the Crown.

Now at the court of the Merovingian kings and also of the lesser kings, the chief officer and chief executor of the king's will was an official called "the Mayor of the Palace." He was everywhere a man of great influence and of high family. He acted not so much like an English Prime Minister as like the vizier, the chief officer, of an Oriental king.

As time passed, in the constant distractions of the kingdom and the weakening power of the central authority, the power of these high officials grew continually.

The distractions and the struggles between the lesser kingdoms in Gaul, and also between the nobles and the king, went on for another century. The contest which really settled the matter, for a while, was a battle at Tertry in 687, in which Pepin, Pepin II., as he was called, defeated the king's forces, and took the king prisoner. It was not, however, till the middle of the next century that the line of the Merovingian kings died out. All that while, however, they were practically dominated by Pepin, the victor at Tertry,

and when their dynasty came to an end he became king of the Franks, and therewith founded a new dynasty, the Carolingian.

Pepin came to the throne with powers derived from two sources. His family had held the great office of Mayor of the Palace in one of the subordinate kingdoms for nearly half a century, and he was also descended from a great bishop, Arnulf. Thus he had all the power of the Church on his side. Charles Martel, who succeeded him, gained an important victory over the Saracens at Tours in 732. That is a very notable event in our story, for it pushed back the Moors south of the Pyrenees again, and freed Christian Gaul from their danger. Further, this same Charles (Martel, or the Hammer, as he was called) served the Church of Rome faithfully in Germany, supporting a mission which Bishop Boniface was carrying on for the conversion of some of the still pagan German tribes to Christianity.

The Pope, Gregory III., on his accession to the Papal throne, was menaced by the Lombards in the North of Italy and by independent Dukes in the south. He appealed to Charles Martel for assistance. The Lombards, however, had fought with Charles at Tours, to save Christendom from the Saracens, and Charles did not care to take arms against them. But the son of Charles, who succeeded him as Pepin III., seems to have understood how greatly his power would be strengthened if he could claim to be supported by the Church. The authority of the Pope at Rome was becoming every year more powerful; Boniface had now the title of Papal Legate, the Pope's representative, and as such he anointed Pepin III. king of the Franks, in the presence of the great nobles, at the capital city of Soissons. Within two years Pepin had defeated the Lombards and rid the Pope of their menace. He did not take their kingdom,

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but the territory that he conquered from them he gave to the Papal See. Thus he made the Papacy—that is to say, the successive Popes of Rome—a territorial sovereignty, owning extensive land and much wealth. At the same time he accepted a title, that of “patrician,” from the Pope. It was a title which had meant much in the days of ancient Rome. It meant nothing now, except that it was a sign of the close links that bound together the Frankish kingdom and the Papacy. But that in itself meant much, for these were the two most powerful forces in the Western world of that time, and both were growing stronger every year.

By the time of Pepin’s death, in 768, he was king of all Gaul.

He left two sons, and to the younger, before an assembly of his nobles, he bequeathed certain provinces; but, fortunately perhaps for the peace of France, the younger son died and all came into the hand of the elder, who was Charles the Great.

And by this time that custom which we have seen growing common, of vassals leaguings themselves together around a lord, had established itself over a great part of the Empire. The feudal system had really become a fact, although it was a fact which was concealed by the power and the splendour of this great emperor, who was so constantly victorious.

The big territorial landowners became “Counts” and the lands over which they exercised authority were called “counties.” We noted the origin of the title a few pages back. Sometimes counties, two or more, had been drawn together into a single larger domain, which might then be called a “duchy,” with a “duke,” or, in French, “duc,” over it. But Charlemagne’s policy was to break up the duchies and collect their revenues and taxes by his own officers as the originally appointed “Counts” had collected them.

Even when the feudal system was fully established, the powers of the lords were not unlimited, by any means, and they governed within the bounds of their lands largely through the "curia," or assembly, summoned from time to time, of the vassals. The king, as well as the lords beneath him, would summon a "curia," and this was called the "curia regis," the king's curia, when it was the assembly of the king's vassals and was summoned by him. There seems to have been no limit to the points that might be discussed in these assemblies; but the lord's assent to any vote passed by them appears to have been required before the measures voted on could be put into operation.

Now the help that Charlemagne gave to the Pope was valuable to him not only against the Lombard foreigners, but against the Roman nobles themselves. It was the Pope, the Bishop, and not the Duke, of Rome who appealed to Charlemagne; and that very fact shows how far the position of the Pope had altered from that of the early bishops of the Church. He had become ruler of a territory, of a great city, even of a State. And yet he had little force of arms with which to defend this possession, which had come to him by the donations of pious Christians. Pepin, we have noted, had given him lands recovered from the Lombards. But the great men in Rome, the great families, constantly disputed the Pope's authority over the city and the State. To have the Emperor as his ally gave the Pope a power against which they could do little.

Under Charlemagne the Frankish Empire grew to its greatest extent and splendour, but it had no rest.

One of the reasons of the Emperor's success in keeping his nobles in tolerable obedience was, doubtless, that he kept them so busy, fighting his battles. He subjected the Northmen (later, Normans) who had come down from Scandinavia in their ships and settled

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themselves along the northern shores of France, facing Britain. Afterwards this land of the Northmen had the name of Normandy.

The Saxons, occupying what later were called the Netherlands, put up a surprisingly strong opposition to the great Emperor, but in the end he conquered their independence. Elsewhere, around his ever-extending boundaries, the smaller nations gave him less trouble. In the end it is not too much to say that his Empire included all of what we know as France and Germany with Belgium, Holland, Denmark, and parts of Scandinavia. Southward he held the northern parts of Italy, nearly as far down as Rome. He crossed the Pyrenees, but gained no lasting hold on any of Spain. Indeed, it was on return from a Spanish expedition that he suffered the greatest disaster that ever befel his arms. This was the defeat of a large body of his forces at Roncevalles, in which fight were killed the great hero Roland and a number of the most illustrious of the Frankish leaders and nobles.

In later years both Charlemagne himself and his great men, such as Roland and others, his paladins, and "the twelve peers," were made the subjects of the most extravagant stories. They were related to have performed superhuman exploits, to have been eight feet in height and to have conducted themselves generally in a manner which Cervantes, the Spanish novel writer, caricatured in his famous story of Don Quixote. The twelve peers may remind us of the twelve knights of King Arthur's Round Table, and it is likely that there was some original connection between the stories.

But Charlemagne was truly Charles the Great without these fabulous additions to his greatness. He died at Aix la Chapelle in 814 and was succeeded by his only surviving son, whom he had crowned with his own hand the year before his death.

CHAPTER XII

HOW THE PEOPLE LIVED

IN this and the next chapters I propose to attempt a sketch of the way in which the tribes of the Goths lived, whether in the Empire of Charlemagne or in our own island. And because the island story must be of the greater interest to us, seeing that it is our own, I shall try to describe the mode of life of the people there, and will ask you to accept that description as giving the type or pattern of the life on the Continent also.

The feudal system did not develop in England precisely as it developed on the Continent of Europe.

This is a statement which may surprise you, for you will no doubt know that the feudal system did exist in England at a rather later date and that the principal part of England's story for many a year was made up of fights between the feudal barons themselves and of combinations of the barons against the king. But this feudalism was brought into England by the Norman kings, after William I.'s conquest in 1066, and again there was a fresh importation of feudal practices under those French kings of the House of Anjou—thence called Angevins—who reigned both over England and over a large slice of France.

But it did not spring up in England like a growth from the soil, as it did in Charlemagne's empire. It had not the same roots in England. The Anglo-Saxon had not quite the same customs of the *comitatus*,

the body-guard devoted to the king or chief, as the Franks had, nor was England as familiar as France with the Roman customs of the *patrocinium*—the relation of patron and client—and the *precarium*—the tenure of land granted in answer to a prayer—out of which the relations between the feudal lord and his vassal so easily grew. Moreover, you will remember that the Anglo-Saxon possession of our England did not include the whole of the island. There were still Britons along the western fringe and there were Picts north of the Forth. And even the land that the Anglo-Saxon did hold was not one kingdom, but divided into three main divisions, to say nothing of some lesser divisions. There were the kingdoms of Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex, to name them in their order from north to south.

At one time we hear of the "Heptarchy," or seven kingdoms, but the number really might be stated equally well as more or less than seven, according as this or the other collection of tribes were reckoned as independent.

Therefore the kingdoms were small, so that the kings, if they had any strong rule at all, could make their ruling strength felt all over their kingdoms. We have seen that one of the reasons why the feudal system came into being on the Continent was that the king was not able, in disturbed times, to make good his authority far from his own headquarters. That failure to make good was less likely to occur to the ruler of the small kingdoms into which England was divided.

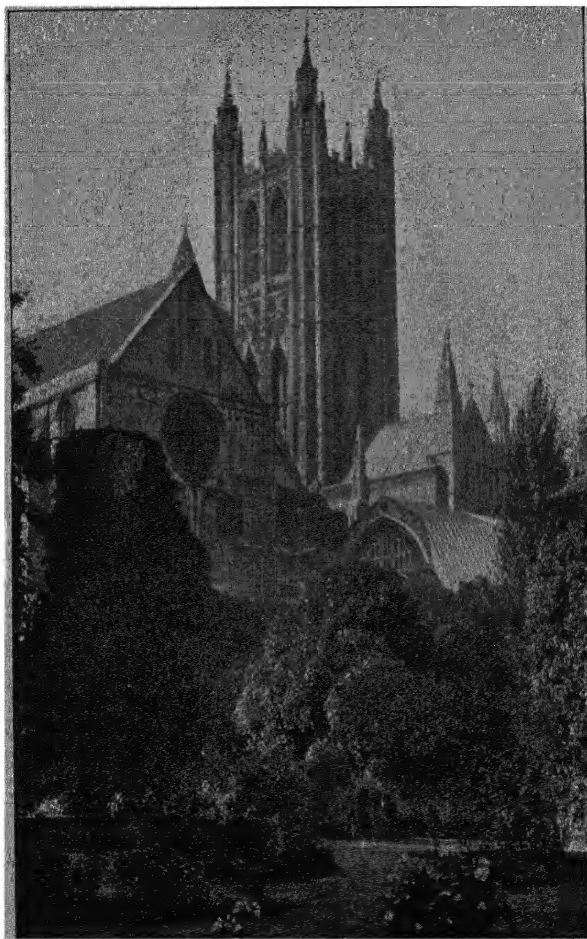
But what did happen in England was that the free man, the man who owned his own piece of land as a freehold, gradually became less free. In the system of tribal government which the Gothic tribes brought westward with them, it had been the custom for the free men of the tribe (the ceorls, or churls) to come

together at certain times and pass laws and try cases that arose under the laws. They were called together by the king and by the chief men (the eorls, or earls) and they voted on any subject that came before the assembly. And still, in England, the freemen had the right to come up to the assemblies and vote. But, though the kingdoms were not very large, they were larger, no doubt, than the territories held by the tribes in their Eastern homes. It was a long way for the voters to come to the assemblies. They had their business, as towns began to grow, to occupy them. Perhaps their agriculture, their mill, or their cattle needed their attention. At all events, however it happened, they ceased to go to the assemblies, and the result, of course, was that the king and the earls got more and more of the law-making and of the decision of cases into their own hands, and the ordinary freeman, though still in name free, and still with his right to vote, came to have less and less power and had to obey the decisions of the king and his council of earls more and more. They had no arrangement by which they might make their wishes known at the assembly by means of a representative appointed by themselves, as our voters now are able to make their wishes known by appointing their Member of Parliament and sending him to Westminster to speak for them. In theory all the old English voters were members of their parliament, so to call it. They could all go to it and speak and vote. But, owing to the difficulties of going, and the distance, the result was that they did not go at all, and so had no one to represent their views in the government under which they were supposed to be free, and in which they were all supposed to have an equal share in governing. They continued, however, to have the power to vote in their more local assemblies, in the "hundred court," which was something like an enlarged parish council

of a few villages, and in the "shire court," or council of the shire, formed by the union of many villages. How these courts were formed, you shall read in the next chapter. It seems to be rather doubtful whether the people availed themselves much of these powers. They probably became more and more content to leave the business of government to the chief men.

These three kingdoms of Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex were constantly striving together for the mastery. Our unfortunate land can have known very little peace until Egbert, who ruled all England from 827 to 836, did succeed in bringing the kingdoms under his sole authority. The rulers of the Franks do not seem to have made any attempt to extend their wide empire so as to include our islands. Charlemagne, however, took much interest in the course of affairs in England, and at one time there was a project of marrying his son to a daughter of the King of Mercia. The project was not accomplished; and at a moment when Mercia was at her strongest, so that there did seem a possibility of her overcoming the other divisions of the country and uniting all under one rule, Charlemagne's influence was exerted to restore the King of Northumbria to his throne. The fact is that the Frankish policy towards England was, not to attempt its conquest, but to thwart its own efforts towards unity, so as to keep it divided, and by reason of its divisions, weak. But to the English generally, Charlemagne showed much favour and they were well received at his court. He had assumed the position of head, with the Pope, of the Catholic Church, and that position in itself gave him a reason and an excuse for interfering, as he did, with Church matters in England.

I have said that the English were well received at the court of the great Emperor. You may take that to mean that the English were by no means, at this far-away date, shut up in their own island. They



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often went to and from the Continent and even to Rome ; and Roman emissaries, priests and bishops, were constantly coming to England.

To get a true picture in your minds of the country, both in England and in other parts of Europe, it is almost necessary first to dismiss from your minds the picture as you know it to-day. Whereas, now, you see for the most part, as you travel by train or motor, cleared land, open fields, and here and there woodland, you have to imagine a land at that time universally covered by wood, with only here and there clearances made by man. Along the tops of the downs, however, exposed to the high winds, there would be very little growth of trees. The woodland would be full of game and of wild creatures. There would be deer, and wolves preying on the deer.

You must imagine a population extraordinarily less numerous than it is now. Even in 1087, when Domesday Book, which contained a "census" of all England, was made, the population is given at 1,500,000. For the most part we may suppose the people living rather after the manner in which the Gothic tribes lived in their own country,—in clearances, or what we might call villages, in the midst of the wild wood and in the river valleys. But there would be some towns, larger villages gradually growing, and these towns you would probably find beginning to be surrounded by a protecting wall of raised earth and palings with gates that were shut at nightfall. Generally the houses, both in the villages and in the towns, would be of timber and clay, built as I will shortly describe ; but after a while the churches and the great men's houses, and the fortified castles would be of stone. There is what we call Saxon stonework still to be seen both in England and in other parts of Europe.

Now through this green wood, which generally

covered our England, there would be roads and tracks. All the travelling by land would be on foot or on horse-back. The use of wheels for vehicles was known even to the Britons before the coming of the English, for they had their war-chariots; but even where the Romans had made their fine roads it is not likely that, after all the years since the Romans left the island, these roads would not have fallen into such disrepair that no wheeled thing could go along them far without sticking in the mud.

For another fact, that you have to realise about the country of that day, is that it was not only far more wooded than it is now : it was also far more marshy. The rivers ran more broadly, their banks were wider. All the neighbourhood of Westminster, for instance, was a swamp, and the Thames, because it was so wide, was far less deep and it was fordable there. Men and horses could walk through it, perhaps on some stones thrown into the bed, and certainly it must have been far less deep and far more wide than it is now.

Because of this marshiness of the lower grounds, the roads by which people travelled went as much as possible along the upper, the harder and drier, ground, sometimes following a line near the top of the downs. The tracks or byways from the woodland and valley villages rose up out of the lowland as quickly as the ground would allow and went up to join the older roads along the downs. But, in spite of all that, you must realise that the rivers were really the great means of communication. They were the chief roads and highways; and the proof of that is that it is always low down, by a river, that all the old towns and the big church establishments and buildings were made. There are Canterbury, London, Winchester, Oxford, Paris, Rouen and very many more that you will think of. Not a river of any size that did not have a town springing up on its banks, and not a town of any size springing up anywhere except on a river's bank.

And the way in which the English and other Gothic people formed their homes and lived their lives appears to have been very different from the way of life of the older Celts. We have seen that the Anglo-Saxons, when they came to England, established themselves in the river valleys and in the woodland country ; but there is evidence that those earliest inhabitants of whom we know anything, the Celts, who were here before the Romans, lived more on the upper lands, on the Downs. This is shown by the relics which the plough and the spade discover for us, on these upper levels, and also by those extraordinary large stone rings of which the most famous is that at Stonehenge, although it is certain that only a few hundred years ago the stones at Avebury near Marlborough must have encircled a very much larger area. Most of the Avebury stones have been broken up now by the farmers to make roads and houses.

The great stone circles had to do with the religion of which the Druids were the priests, and you should note that this Avebury, near Marlborough, is a very central spot, in England. It is on high ground, and we know that many tracks or roadways led from it as a centre, going out like spokes of a wheel. Also you may notice that many of the rivers radiate out from that central high ground and find their way thence in different directions to the sea. Probably that part of the country was looked on as particularly sacred because it was so central.

Now for people coming to England from the Continent of Europe, the easiest way to come, because it was the shortest sea-passage, would be across the Channel at, or near, Dover. Thence, if they wanted to get into the heart of England, they would be prevented from going northward by the Thames. They could not cross the Thames on foot or on horse till they came to London, where the Romans made their

Watling Street, as it was called, across the river and thence up to Chester.

But as a matter of fact they were more likely to wish to go westward than northward, because it was in the west of England that those things of value lay for which, in the old days, people did come from the Continent to England—that is the lead and tin that were in the mines. These lay in the west of England and in Ireland. In Ireland, in the Wicklow mountains, some gold was found. So, then, going westward, these people came to the meeting of the roads at or about Avebury and the Salisbury Plain country.

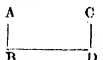
On those high downs and on that thin soil there would be few and small trees. The woodland would be all below, say rising not much more than 500 feet above sea-level. Therefore this high country gave the best and easiest land for the living of a people who were in the pastoral stage; that is, had flocks and herds. It was, and it still is, good sheep land. And it did not need clearing.


The Anglo-Saxons came with somewhat different habits. They had been used to living in the woodlands and the river valleys, rather than on open downs; and therefore it was to the lower lands that they naturally resorted. They established themselves in villages there, as they had been established in their homes across the Channel.

I would remind you again that I am trying to tell you the story of how these people came and settled in England, and how the kind of life that they lived has developed into the kind of life that we lead now, not only because it is our very own English story, and therefore of the closest interest to us, but also because it is in much the same way that the Gothic tribes settled and developed over most of the Frankish Empire and also where the Visigoths lived, in Spain, both while they were the actual rulers of Spain and

also in the times of the Moorish conquest of that country. So that it is the story of a great part of the world, and of the part most important for the world's progress, that we may see being enacted on a small scale in our own island.

In the river valleys, then, these incoming Saxons would establish themselves on some firm and not too marshy bit of land. There they would build the houses of their villages. And the houses, at first, were built in this manner: they would either leave four tree stems, as they cleared the woodland, or else would drive four poles into the ground, to form the corners of the projected house, which we will call

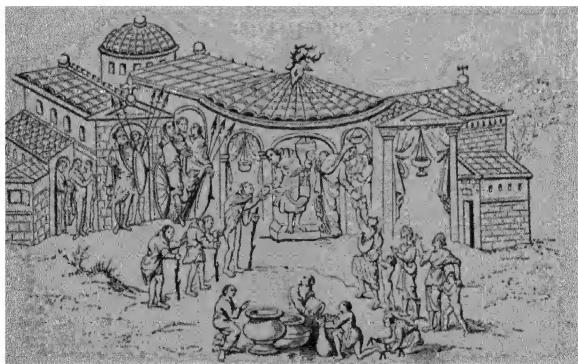


Then they would bring together and fasten together, at their tops, the trunks or poles A and B and the poles C and D, so that they came like this . Thus they got the shape of the house.

You may note that this is somewhat the shape of that Gothic arch, which became so important in later building. The house, at first, was divided into two rooms, at most, in one of which the men lived and in the other the women. The builders threw a roofing pole across, from the top of one of the arches—that is to say, from the point at which the poles A and B were fastened together, to the top of the other arch, where C and D were fastened together. This made the “roof tree.” Then they put struts, or strengthening pieces of wood, across from one pole to the other, about at the height where the poles began to bend most sharply so as to come together. The usual distance from each of the poles, as between A and B, and also between C and D, where they entered the ground, was 16 feet. Thus they had the frame of the house constructed.

Then they would apply slighter rods of timber to the sides, in the kind of weaving way in which you

must have seen those hurdles made which are used very generally in England for penning sheep. It is what is called wattle work—the rods going in and out, under and over each other. Then they would plaster up the crevices with clay, “daubing” it, as it is called, so that the whole work is called “wattle and daub.” That is how their houses were made, or somehow like that. I will not affirm that it was just in the order that I have mentioned that each of the processes was



AN ANGLO-SAXON MANSION.

performed, but it is tolerably sure that it was somewhat thus that those Saxons and most of the German tribes made their houses.

As a rule the houses were thatched, but sometimes tiled with roofing tiles, after the fashion of the villas that the Romans had built. The floor might also be tiled.

In the houses of the wealthier people the walls were often hung with tapestry, woven and worked by the Anglo-Saxon ladies, who were skilful in spinning and in needlework. These tapestries were hung from hooks,

tenter-hooks, from which we have our proverb of "being on tenter-hooks." They served to exclude the draught, as well as for adornment, for probably the "wattle and daub" was not always wind proof.

And then there was a hole at the top of the roof to let out the smoke of the fire, which would be lighted in the centre of the room, or hall. The houses had no chimneys. Sometimes they had windows for light, but these were only slits in the walls—not glazed.

They did know something of the use of glass, for they had glass drinking-vessels, as well as vessels of wood and of silver. The horns of the cattle were used for the same purpose. For the furniture of their houses they had tables, generally of a round shape. There are several quaint pictures, adorning old manuscripts, showing them seated, or standing, at dinner. They had benches and stools, but no movable seats, as it seems. The seat they called a "sett" a thing to "settle," or "sit" on. We still use the word "settle" for a kind of sofa, and "stool" comes from the same Anglo-Saxon word. We are learning now not only the story of the beginning of our own ways of life, but also much of the story of our own words and way of talking.

In the better houses the seat and table at which the heads of the family sat were raised on a flooring a little above the level of the rest, on what was called a dais. This would only be in the bigger houses. The dinner and other meals were always served in the hall, or larger room, which really was the one important part of the house. The apartments for the women were sometimes adjoining the hall, under the same roof, but sometimes "the lady's bower," as it was called, was a small separate building. Bed places, like berths in a ship's cabin, were often arranged for the men along the sides of the great hall, screened off by a curtain. You will understand that the better and larger a

house was, and the wealthier its owner, the more it would have of these fittings and conveniences. Most of the houses in the ordinary village we may suppose to have been almost altogether without them.

For their food at table, even in the best houses, they do not seem to have had forks. They had knives, but how much they were used at table we hardly know. Fingers were the chief instruments; and they were careful to wash their hands before and



AN ANGLO-SAXON DINNER-PARTY.

(From Wright's *Homes of Other Days*.)

after meals. Indeed washing, both of the person and of their clothes, seems to have been more carefully and more often done thus early than a little later in the story. I am not giving you any account of their clothes, because you will get an idea of them much more quickly and exactly from the illustrations.

Often, in the large houses, they would have one or more minstrels playing to them as they ate, for they were fond of music and of the dance, and of various games. The Romans had left, in Britain, the tradition

of their games and gladiators' exhibitions in the amphitheatres, and these had not been forgotten. The Saxons may have come into that tradition and adopted the games, or they may have brought their own. They had games that were a kind of mimic warfare, with bows and arrows and javelin or dart throwing, which no doubt served to keep them in practice for the frequent wars which the kings waged together and for which a contingent from each village was required.

Their chief food seems to have been bread, with butter, cheese, and milk. This shows how much they depended on their live-stock, even though they seldom, as we may suppose, ate fresh meat. But they had poultry and ate much fish, and had a few vegetables, such as beans, besides the wild produce of the woods, like blackberries, mushrooms, nuts, and so on. They brewed beer, and mixed it with honey to make the favourite drink called "mead." A little wine came in from the Continent; but only the rich men could afford that.

To give them light, we know that they had candles, made both of the tallow, the fat of animals, and of wax, from the bees, and they also used lamps, holding oil, with a wick from the spout, like the Roman lamps.

As a rule, in the villages established in the woodland, where the houses were not close together, on the sides of a road, or in a circle, but were scattered among the cleared places, a mound of earth with a hedge on top was thrown up round about it. It was called by the Saxon word from which we have our word "wall"; but it hardly was what we should call a wall. Perhaps it was partly to protect the home garden, which lay within it, from strolling cattle and wild creatures, and partly for defence against enemies. There is evidence that the Anglo-Saxon ladies were fond of flowers and of their gardens.

Where the houses lay alongside a road, and

especially beside what was called a "street" (which meant one of the paved Roman roads, from *stratum*, meaning a paved surface), this surrounding wall or mound would not be made.

As time passed they began to make improvements in their houses. The first improvement seems to have been to build walls, up to about the height of a man's head—timber walls only at first—making use of trunks that had grown with a bend in them, as the corner posts, for the arch. From that came the occasional use of stone for the walls, where stone was easily to be found, or of brick, where there was clay convenient for the baking; but for very many years wood was the usual material for the building of all except the great houses, churches, castles, and the like. Of course it was very inflammable, and you know how, even as late down in our story as the date (1666) of the great fire of London, the destruction was so complete because almost all the houses were of wood.

CHAPTER XIII

HOW THE PEOPLE LIVED—*continued*

It is likely that some of the Celts, before the coming of the later invaders, had begun to descend from their hill villages and to occupy the river valleys and clearings in the woodlands ; but we do not know much of their story, and have to piece it together as best we may from the signs of their residence which they have left. Both before the Roman occupation of Britain and also for two or more centuries afterwards, we do not know at all clearly what went on in our island.

But about the Saxons, nearly from their first coming to England, we have written evidence to give us information. We know something of how their village societies were formed, and these societies are extremely interesting to us, because we can see from them how our present way of living came about, how the landowner and the tenant, the squire and the agricultural labourer came to be.

The villages, then, in these Saxon times, consisted of a group of the "wattle and daub" houses formed in the manner that you have seen. If they were built near one of the roads, the houses would be on either side of the road, forming something like what we call "the village street" now. If they were not near a road they would often be arranged in a circle, with a clear space in the middle. In this clear space, surrounded by the houses, we may see the earliest form of the modern "village green."

And then, outside the circle of houses would be the lands which the villagers held and worked. There would be a certain area of this land which would be cultivated, with the plough, for crops, and, further, outside that there would be land which would be grazed by the villagers' cattle and sheep. It would be what we call "common land," and any freeman in the village would have the right to turn out on it a certain fixed number of animals. Besides this there would be a certain area of ground beyond again, called "the waste," where the pigs of the villagers might be turned out to feed in the woods. This area also was defined by law, so that it should not run into the area allotted to a neighbouring village.

Now the area of cultivated land held by each of the ceorls (the churls, or free peasants) in the village was generally fixed at thirty acres. It was reckoned that thirty acres was the limit that a team of oxen could plough and keep in order during the year. But a team was reckoned to consist of eight oxen, and each ceorl was only allowed one pair of oxen.

You will see what this implies. It implies that they shared their oxen among them, four of the proprietors coming together, with two oxen each, to make up a team. Thus there was sharing in the oxen and in the ploughing work that the oxen did, as well as in the common grazing land. I want you to notice, as a great feature of the early village life, this sharing or community, this having many things in common.

Then there were the cattle and the flocks and the pigs; and these would all need looking after. But each owner did not look after his own. On the contrary, a herdsman for the cattle, a shepherd for the sheep, and a swineherd for the pigs were appointed.

The ceorls were not the only freemen. There was a class of freemen, too, of less importance than these holders of thirty acres. They had to do some of the

work under the thirty-acre men ; and perhaps it was from their class that the swineherd and the shepherd were taken. Another man who was employed in the same way, as a servant of the community, was the miller, the corn-grinder.

Below this lower class of freemen, again, came the serfs, the slaves. In the earliest known documents that show us what the duties and rights of the freemen in the villages were, there is no mention at all of the rights and duties of the serfs, because, as a matter of fact, they had, in law, no rights, and to their duties their was no limit. They had to do what they were bid, and their masters had as much authority over them as over cattle. They were indeed owned as " chattels," or cattle. But it does not follow that they were ill-treated, for a wise master would not treat even his cattle or his sheep ill. He would treat them well, because the stronger and healthier they were the more work they would do for him or the more milk or wool they would give him. It was to his interest to be kind to both the two-legged and the four-legged cattle. The slaves were members of the conquered race for the most part.

And then, besides the ceorls, and probably at first chosen by them and from among them, was the eorl. His business was to look after the community in a general way, to preside at its meetings, to act as its judge, and as its leader in case of quarrels with the neighbours. In return, he had portions of land given to him amidst the portion of the ceorls, and the ceorls had to work the land for him, or to get it worked for him by their slaves. Generally the law was that they had to give him so many days' work during the week. That is the way in which their work was measured. They thus paid him what was really very like a rent for his land, and as time went on it was more and more in the light of what we call rent that it was

regarded. Similarly, when they brought corn to the mill to be ground, they had to put a certain portion of the ground corn into a chest especially kept there for the eorl. And here again, this paying in of the corn came to convey the idea that the mill belonged to the eorl and that this was a payment for the privilege of grinding the corn there. Thus the eorl came more and more into the position of owner of the land and of all in the village.

Besides the duties that the eorl owed to the ceorls, and the duties they owed to him, he himself had duties that he owed to the king. These were chiefly three, to follow the king to war, to maintain the bridges within the boundaries of the village lands, and to help build the fortified places, the castles. He also had to see that the king's taxes were paid, when taxes began to be imposed. And just as, out of the payments of service and of corn made by the ceorls to the eorl, the idea grew that these payments were made as a kind of rent for the land, of which the eorl was the owner, so too, as between the eorl and the king, the services that the eorl owed and paid began to be looked on as payments made by the eorl for the land which he held from the king. Therefore the whole land of the country began to be regarded as in the king's possession and to be rented, as we should say, from him by the eorls, by whom it was again in part "sub-let," to use our modern term, to the ceorls or peasants.

As we have seen, the area that it was considered right for the ceorl to hold was thirty acres, but in various ways this might be divided or added to, so that the original equality did not last long. And as the population grew, more land had to be taken in, from the waste, for cultivation, to provide for younger sons.

The eorls had a curious power of forbidding, if they so pleased, the marriages proposed by the ceorls and their children. Perhaps the power was originally

voted to them by the ceorls themselves as a means of controlling the population, so that there should not be more people than the available land could support ; but it is a curious power for any authority to have over men who called and believed themselves " free." But the fact is that the so-called freedom of these men became more and more of an illusion ; they became less and less free.

After Christianity was accepted as the religion of England there was another person, besides those already mentioned, who had a right to be supported by the community of the village. This was the priest, and the tenth of some of the produce, which was allotted as his share, in return for his services as priest, is the origin of those " tithes " which still are paid to the clergy.

All payments were, for a long time, made " in kind," that is to say, for instance, in corn, or in wool or milk, or in so many days' work. Coined metal, as what we call " a medium of exchange," had been known in England for a very long while, even before the coming of the Romans, but its use does not seem to have been common. After a while, however, its use increased, and gradually payment in coin, by the ceorls to the eorl, began to take the place of payment in kind, and the eorl might welcome the coin because of its ease of transmission to the king when the king required money for his wars.

At first, as you will see from all this, the villages were very much what we call self-supporting. They had all they required for food. They had the wool of their sheep and the hides of their cattle to be worked up into clothing. They had unlimited firewood from the forest. So they had little need of money, for exchange. But as they became more rich than their own needs demanded, in such things as wool and hides and the foods that did not perish quickly, such as

cheese, then they might begin to exchange these things for other produce which they could not make for themselves, and which might be brought in by the travelling merchants, called "chapmen" (from the word "cheap," to sell, whence we have the London street, called Cheapside, to-day). These chapmen came on horseback with their wares and bought and sold in the villages, and then it became most useful to have coin as a means of exchange. Even the wool was a bulky stuff to carry; yet it was less inconvenient than some of the other commodities. The two chief articles of necessity that the villagers could not supply themselves with were iron implements and salt.

This wool-selling of the villages, we may be sure, was done in a very small way at first, but it grew and grew until it became very important and a source of great riches, as wealth was then estimated, to England. This was when the carrying of the wool over-Channel, to the Continent, had been arranged for, and there was a regular trade going on. That, however, was not to happen until the days when the Normans were rulers of England and could keep their own kinsmen, the Scandinavian rovers, from piracy in the narrow sea straits.

At the point of time to which we have now brought down our story, say 800, when Charlemagne was anointed Emperor by the Pope in Rome, the Danes, from Denmark and perhaps from Norway and Sweden too, were constantly vexing and harrying all the eastern and southern coasts of England and the opposite coasts of the Continent. Their way was to sail up the rivers with their ships, to take everything which they could easily carry away, to work havoc of every kind, by fire and sword—then back to their ships and away again.

At this time you will note that the bigger towns were all in the river valleys, as we have seen already,

and also that most of them were not very far inland. In Britain the Romans had fixed their capital city in the north, at York, but after they went away the important part of England was the south. It was the part near the Continent, where all civilisation and religion and good things came from—also, where the conquerors of England were apt to come from. The narrowest sea between the two was what we now call the Straits of Dover. All these circumstances led to the establishment or to the growth of Canterbury as one of the great cities of England.

I write of England as of one country, but you will remember that it still was a disunited, a divided England. It remained so disunited, and vexed by constant wars between the rival kingdoms, until brought under one rule in 827, by the power and wisdom of the great King Egbert, who had come to the throne of Wessex in A.D. 800, the very year of Charlemagne's consecration at Rome, and held authority over all England from 827 till his death in 836. I write this vague and indefinite phrase "held authority" on purpose, because it certainly was not a very definite rule that he held over the whole country, and it must have differed in different parts. He even conquered Wales and all the Celtic part of Britain except Cumbria—our modern Cumberland. It was towards the end of his reign that his more or less united kingdom began to be seriously harassed by the Danish sea-rovers attacking the eastern and southern coasts.

We have noticed already that the principal towns grew naturally on the banks of the rivers. There is a further fact about their situation which we may observe, and that is that the chief and largest of them were placed just so far up the rivers that they might get best advantage from the tide. In days long before steam was used to drive ships, and when they could

sail only with the wind very much in their favour, you can easily understand how valuable the help of the tide would be, both for coming up and going down a river.

Then, if the town were placed just above the point up to which the saltish sea-water came, the fresh water coming down could be used for drinking and for such processes as brewing and tanning hides which were very early industries; and there would be a constant flow of water to work the corn-grinding mills. Considerations of that kind probably influenced the Anglo-Saxons in choosing sites for their towns such as Canterbury, and Winchester, and London, which became the capital after the Norman conquest. From the Continent people could cross the Straits of Dover and find themselves very soon in the sheltered waters of the Thames estuary or of the Stour which went past Canterbury. The land about the mouth of the Stour has risen a good deal since those days, and the passage of ships up the river was more open and wide then than it is now.

The advantage of Winchester, as a site for a large town, was that from the mouth of the Scine, which came down past Rouen, a very short sea-passage would bring the mariner into the sheltered water behind the Isle of Wight. He could enter that shelter from the east or from the west, as the wind served best, and he would be out of sight of land, either French land or English land, for only a very short distance in the mid-crossing. This was a matter of much importance to the sailors of those days; they did not at all like to go out of sight of their landmarks. Then, once in the Solent, as we call it, the shipman would take advantage of the tide to carry him up Southampton Water, and very likely some way up the Itchen river, towards Winchester, before he need run his ship aground and disembark.

As a further advantage you may see that both Canterbury and Winchester had high ground close about them on which a fortified camp could be made for the protection of the town. And we know, in fact, that such camps were made in the vicinity of both towns. The ground bears signs of them to this day. The beginnings of London are thought to have been a British hill fort on the hill where St. Paul's Cathedral now stands. Of other cities we know that Manchester was a British settlement and a place where the Druids worshipped, and later a Roman city. We hear of Birmingham as a village of the Saxon Beormingas. Liverpool was a fishing village in Saxon times, but not of sufficient importance to be named in Domesday Book.

This brief account may, I hope, give you some little idea of the manner in which those people lived, and so laid the foundations of our life to-day. They were without a great many things which we look on as absolute necessities. They had, at first, no cotton and no linen for their clothes. They had no tea or coffee to drink; no tobacco to smoke. They had beer, which they brewed and sometimes sweetened with honey, for they understood bee-keeping. The honey was important for them, for they had no sugar. Neither had they potatoes; and they grew no root crops for their cattle to eat in winter.

That fact that they had no root crops was important in their lives, for it meant that all they had to keep their cattle and sheep alive on in the winter was such hay as they could make and store. It would not support a very large stock all through the winter, and the consequence was that they killed down all their stock, except what was wanted for breeding purposes, at the beginning of each winter.

Now you may remember I said that one of the chief necessities that the villagers would have to buy,

because they could not produce it for themselves, was salt. Seeing how many of what we call necessities, such as sugar and the like, they could do without, you may wonder that salt should be so necessary. But now that you know about this killing off of so much of the stock at the beginning of winter you may begin to see the necessity of the salt. Unless all this good food was to go bad it must be salted, in order to preserve it for eating as required. So, in the winter months, they might have meat sometimes; but it would be salted meat, not fresh.

But of course that would not apply to any game that they might kill by hunting in "the waste"—the woodland—nor does it appear that freemen were forbidden, in Anglo-Saxon times, to hunt. They had bows, which they made of yew or other wood, and spear shafts and arrows of ash, and the English very early were famous for their archery. They were famous too for their breed of hunting dogs, which were sometimes exported to the Continent, so highly were they valued.

So they had this resource—free hunting in woods which probably were well stocked with game in comparison with the small human population. Make a note in your mind of this importance of the game, due to the fact that they could get no fresh meat from their domestic stock in winter. It is an importance which partly explains the reason of the fearfully severe game laws—laws to protect the game—which were passed a little later.

That is the picture, as well as I have been able to draw it for you, of the life of those people, our ancestors. You may take it, too, as something like a picture of the life of the people over a large part—say, all except the southern parts—of Charlemagne's wide empire. The feudal system came, to change the conditions, in that Frankish Empire earlier than it came to England; but even in England the con-

ditions were such as would pass easily into feudal arrangements. In theory the ceorls were free, not the vassals of a lord, but their freedom was becoming more and more of an illusion. The corl was there, getting an increasing authority and an increasing possession of the land, and so making everything ready for the feudal baron to step into his place. But the state of England did not render it so necessary for the ceorl to seek protection under his eorl, as we saw that it became a necessity in France. In England the king, whether in a divided or a united England, could still protect the people and exercise his authority over them and see justice done.

When we come to the tenth century we find that the title of corl, or earl, for the head man of the village, was no longer in use, but a person exercising almost exactly the same power, and having the same privileges as the earl, was now called the "thane." His powers and privileges were perhaps no greater than those of the earl, but there was this difference in his position, that there was no longer any illusion of his being appointed by, and being one of, the villagers. He was appointed by the king. Generally he had been one of the king's soldiers, and the lordship of a village seems often to have been granted him as a reward for good military service. This would be particularly likely to happen with villages in conquered districts; and in many districts, with the perpetual warfare going on, villages must have been conquered and reconquered again and again.

The title of earl, however, did not die out in England, as it did on the Continent. Either during or before the tenth century, the villages began to be grouped into what were called "hundreds." Probably the name arose from the idea that each "hundred" was a grouping of ten villages, each represented by its ten thirty-acre men, as we have called them. It is

scarcely likely that many hundreds kept these figures long, or even that many ever had them precisely exact.

Then a grouping was made of some of the hundreds, and this group of hundreds was then called a “shire.” The title of earl came to be given to the lord, no longer of a single village, but of a shire—a much more important post. The earl of the shire was appointed, like the thane, by the king. There were “hundred courts,” as we noticed before, which the freemen, so-called, of the village could attend and vote in. And there were also “shire courts,” held less often, which also the freemen might attend, and wherein also they might vote. The president of the shire court was the earl.

We may compare the earl and his shire, in England, with the comte, or count, in France, with his comté or county.

Thus, or somewhat thus, went the story of the people's lives in Europe throughout the time of the rule of the Danish kings in Britain and up to its conquest by William of Normandy in 1066.

CHAPTER XIV

THE SETTLEMENTS OF THE SEA-ROVERS

It is in the reign of King Egbert that we begin to hear of the Danes coming as sea-rovers and raiding the coasts on both sides of the English Channel. They came, they harried and stole, and went away again.

That was bad. But it began to be worse when they did not go away again, when they came in such numbers that they could actually dare to establish themselves for the winter up some river. They had then come to stay. Within thirty years after the death of Egbert they became so strong that they took the towns of York and Nottingham. The English kingdom was again, at this time, disunited. This was partly owing to the custom—which proved fatal to the union of the continental empire also—for a king, at his death, to divide up his kingdom, by will, and give portions to two or more of his sons. But in a fortunate hour for England, Alfred, who won the name of “the Great,” came to the throne of Wessex in 871.

He fought the Danes on land, uniting the people of Kent and Essex with his own Wessex men. He fought them with varying success, on the whole getting the better of them. He also (and you might make a note of this as the beginning of Britain’s naval power) defeated some of their ships with his own fleet.

Whereupon came many more Danes with many more ships; and English and Danes had to meet in many a battle and skirmish until a decisive victory at

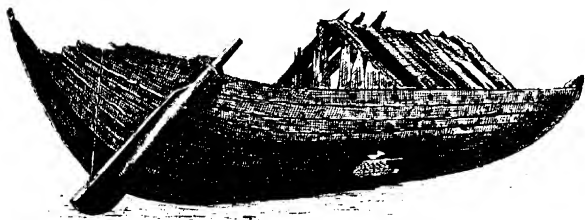
length enabled Alfred to come to a settlement with them. Even so, the settlement was far from establishing him as sovereign over all England. An arrangement was made by which the Danes were to occupy, undisturbed, the eastern side, and were to leave the English in peaceable possession of the west. We have spoken before of that old Roman road called Watling Street, which ran from London to Chester : you may take that line as about the boundary line between the two peoples who now held England.

Alfred, besides this peaceful settlement with the Danes, owes his claim to the title of "great" to the wisdom with which he settled the affairs of his own kingdom and for the favour that he showed to literature and culture of all kinds. He was a Christian, and had insisted, when he made his treaty with the Danes, that they should profess themselves Christians and be baptised. He did all that he could to help in educating his people. He himself made translations into the Anglo-Saxon of books written in Latin giving the description and history of parts of Germany from which some of the Gothic tribes had come. He also caused books on religion to be translated, so that the people who were educated sufficiently to be able to read their own language might study them, and while he rebuilt monasteries and other buildings belonging to the Church, which had been ruined in the perpetual wars, he expected the priests and the Churchmen (the clerics, or clerks) to undertake the education of the people.

Probably Alfred was far too wise to suppose that peace would be kept for long between his Anglo-Saxons on the west of the Watling Street and the Danes on the east. The Danes were of a race akin to the Anglo-Saxons and to the Franks—they were German or Gothic. The Romans and Anglo-Saxons themselves had both come into Britain as quite a different race

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from the inhabitants whom they conquered ; but the Danes were of nearly the same stock as those whom they found, and harassed, in England. Both were of that race called Nordic, of which it was characteristic for the men to be tall and large, with fair hair and blue eyes. We have seen how the English were gradually losing their freedom under their earls or thanes. The Danes came in with their freedom little if any less than it ever had been. They were hardy and independent ; and even to this day we find these qualities to be characteristic of the dwellers in those lands east of the Watling Street in which most of the



A VIKING SHIP.

Danes settled. The southern and western men are of a 'amer character.

It would take far too long to tell how the Danes broke the peace arranged by Alfred, and all about the continual fighting, with the many changes of fortune which came to pass between them and the English all through the tenth century. Towards the end of that century we find the English kings bribing the commanders of combined fleets of Danes and of allied Northmen, from Norway, to retire and leave the English coasts. Of course that only meant that these pirates came again the next year, so that it became necessary to levy a special tax, which was called the Danegeld, to buy them off.

An English king, Ethelred, in the hope, as we are told, of making the Northmen his friends instead of his persecutors and pirates, married the daughter of the Duke of Normandy. This Normandy is the Normandy that you will see on the maps of to-day and lies just across the English Channel. The Duke and his Normans (or Northmen) were of the same kin as the ravagers of the English coast. Therefore Ethelred seemed to be likely to gain peace for his kingdom when he married a daughter of this race. What did happen is that about sixty years later (he was married to the Duke's daughter in 1002) another Duke of Normandy, William, established himself as King of England. It is with this marriage of Ethelred's that the influence of Normandy in England begins. The Normans did not come upon England all of a sudden in 1066, the year of their conquest. There had been some preparation leading to it.

Unfortunately for Ethelred's hope of peace, he formed, or was led to agree to, a design of exterminating the Danes in England by a wholesale massacre. It was a design in which the English were the more ready to take a hand because of their hatred of the Danish troops which several of the kings had been keeping in their pay. These mercenaries were very insolent and high-handed in their dealings with the civil inhabitants, and on the signal given the inhabitants readily rose against them.

Thus a general massacre took place; but then followed that which, with a people of the fierce and resolute character of the Danes and Northmen, was sure to follow. A great force came over the sea, and, though twice bought off by payment of the Danegeld, they came again in 1013, and yet again, and finally, two years later, under Canute they came to stay. Canute, victorious, was first acknowledged king of the old Danish possessions in the

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cast of England and a few weeks later of the entire country.

Within a year he too married that sister of the Duke of Normandy who had been married to Ethelred and was now a widow. And so, once more, the Norman influence came in.

Canute, who reigned close on twenty years, was followed by two kings of Danish race whose reigns only covered seven years together, and then followed the last of our Saxon kings, the first Edward. He was Saxon on the father's side; for his father was that Ethelred who married the Duke of Normandy's sister. On the mother's side, therefore, he was Norman.

The right of this Edward, called the Confessor, to the kingdom was not undisputed, but he had the support of a certain Earl Godwine, who, with his sons, had become so great a power that he claimed, and was able to maintain, lordship over half the realm of England. This great earl consolidated his power by marrying his daughter to King Edward, and one of the sons of Earl Godwine was that Harold who became king after Edward, and who was defeated and killed by William the Conqueror at the Battle of Hastings.

It is my wish, in telling this story, to trouble you with as few names as possible, in order to avoid confusion, but I want you to bear these names in mind and to be clear as to how the people were related to each other, because it is this relationship that explains how it was that William the Conqueror came to lay claim to the throne of England. He did not merely come as a conqueror to take, by force, what was not his. He came to enforce what was, or what he claimed to be, his right.

Harold, then, succeeded Edward, on Edward's death, as king. But before his death Edward had tried to arrange for a successor. We have to remember

that the principle that the eldest son of the king should follow his father on the throne was not established in those days. But Edward had no son. He had a great-nephew, who was no more than a child. And he seems to have had no wish that the kingdom should go back to the Danes, although he had married a sister of Harold, the Dane. So he approached William, Duke of Normandy, with a proposal to appoint him as successor.

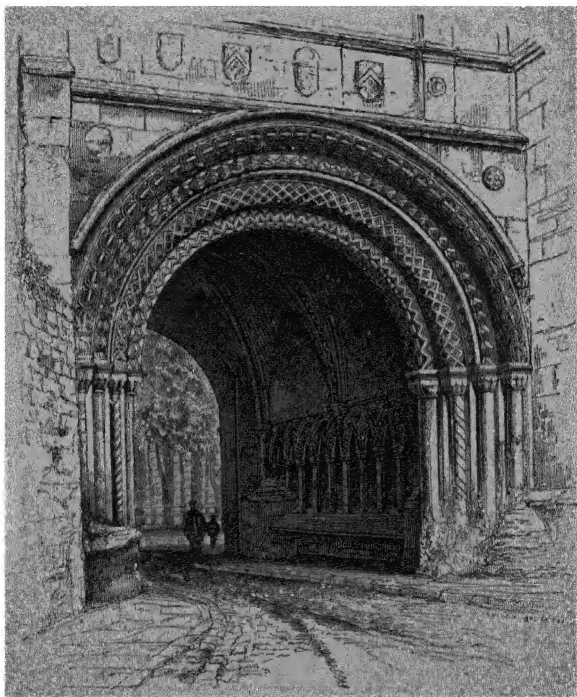
So the story is told ; but its truth is not clearly proved. It has also been said that he sent Harold himself as his ambassador in this delicate matter, to the Norman court. That does not sound probable. What does appear to be established is that Harold, by some means or other—possibly by having to run his ship on the coast of Normandy in a storm—came into William's power, and that, while so held, waiting till a ransom should be paid for him and he should be released, William made him take a very solemn oath that on Edward's death he would do his best to support William's claim to the throne of England.

That being done, Edward dies, and Harold, far from keeping that most solemn oath, claims the kingdom of England for himself, and actually accedes to the throne, apparently without any serious opposition from the people.

But then comes William of Normandy, mightily indignant, with his fleet. He lands at Hastings, encounters Harold and his forces, defeats them heavily, Harold is killed in the battle, and William becomes King of England. He is accepted with a readiness, and with a slight opposition after the first battle, which we may suppose to be due to two causes, one, that our country had been so long vexed by fighting that it was weary and was willing to receive any peace at any price, and, two, that the Norman influence had spread through the country far and wide

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before the actual coming of the conqueror, so that the means for establishing his conquest were already prepared.



NORMAN GATEWAY, COLLEGE GREEN, BRISTOL.

But it is very likely that this coming of the Northmen, the Normans, out of France will have caused you to ask a question or two in your minds. You may be wondering how it should be that Normans, Northmen,

should be coming to England from Normandy, that is to say from the south. You may be wondering how it is that there are Northmen established there, as Dukes, that is as great rulers. When last we considered the Continent of Europe this Normandy was part of the great Empire of Charlemagne. In order to see how the Northmen came to be there we may go back to the Empire of Charlemagne in the ninth century. We have seen how that Empire was brought about and compacted. It is now a most important thing for the understanding of the great story that we should see how quickly that splendid Empire fell to pieces after Charlemagne's death. The understanding of that will make quite clear how the Normans were able to settle themselves as independent rulers of the part of France which is still, after them, called Normandy.

CHAPTER XV

THE CRUSADES

WE have seen that the kings of the date to which this greatest story now has come, do not seem to have realised that if they partitioned up their possessions among several sons the result was likely to be that there would be disunion and fighting. Charlemagne had three sons, and would, it appears, have divided his Empire by his will among them, but two of those sons died, so that the whole Empire came into the hands of the survivor.

This survivor, however, had, in his turn, three sons, and at his death the Empire was divided amongst the three. In this division we see the beginnings of the present arrangement of the greater part of Europe, for one son took a territory of which the boundaries were nearly the same as those of modern France, another had what corresponds more or less to Germany of to-day, and the third to something very like modern Italy. The Italian brother, the eldest, had the title of Emperor.

And now—to state shortly what was the rather natural outcome of that division—the kings, or those who claimed the kingship, of those territories fought over their possessions for at least a century and a half, 150 years.

Of course that meant that the people of the country were in constant misery and fear of their lives and uncertainty about any property they might have.

Bands of soldiers, followers of their feudal lords, went about the country, and were very rough and brutal, taking all they could find and paying nothing. The authority of the king could not deal with these disturbers of the peace. The big landowners grew more and more independent of the king. He might be their feudal lord, in name, but for all this century and a half the King of France had no more power than several of the great lords themselves. More and more then it became necessary for the poorer class, if they would live safely, to live under the protection of one or other of the big men. This led to the clustering of the houses of the poor people round about the castle, the strong place, of their lord. He organised them as a fighting force, when fighting had to be done, and stood for them in place of the king. They were his faithful subjects, getting his protection as their return for working and fighting for him. Some of these lords grew so powerful and so dangerous to the king that he was glad to grant them their independence and full possession of their lands in return for their assurance that they would not take arms against him and attack his territory.

Now all the while that the Danes and Northmen were harrying the shores of England they paid their attentions no less to the coasts of France, going up the Seine to Rouen, especially, and establishing winter quarters there very much as the Danes did in England. The emperor and the kings of France strove against them, but if they were defeated they only came back again in numbers larger than before. The end of it was that in the beginning of the tenth century the king deemed it his best policy to give up to the Northmen or Normans all that Normandy which they held despite all he could do against them. He made it condition that they should become Christians. And thus it was that they were firmly established as a

Duchy under a Duke (dux, or leader) at the date of their conquest of England in 1066.

Descendants of Charlemagne continued to sit on the throne of France until near the end of the tenth century, when one Hugh Capet, a great noble, was elected by his fellow-nobles as king. Note that ; that it was by an election of the feudal lords, not because he had a hereditary right—that is, a right by birth—to the throne, that he became king. And how long that dynasty of the Capetian kings, as they are called, lasted in France you may realise from the fact, which you most likely will remember, that the king who was guillotined during the French revolution was called “Louis Capet” by those revolutionists who proclaimed that all men were equal and that titles of all kinds were to be done away.

This first elected Capet king, however, had no more power over those who had elected him than the kings who had descended from Charlemagne. But the Capetians kept the kingdom in their family, as we have seen, all down the ages. Still, it was not until nearly two hundred years later than the election of Hugh Capet that any of his descendants began to have really great power. About that date, that is to say towards the end of the twelfth century, or a little before 1200, the king succeeded in making his power over the nobles very much more effective, and therewith the last days of the feudal system came to an end. It passed away to give place to what is known as the “absolute monarchy”—government by a king who was able to do anything that he chose, without check of any kind.

In the meantime the Carolingian kings (descendants of Carolus Magnus, Charles the Great, or Charlemagne) went out of the story, and the Capetians came into it, in the midst of perpetual disorder and fights among the feudal lords. Each duke, in his duchy, each count in

his county, was a little independent king. It seems a wonder that the whole government of Europe did not fall apart and dissolve into these independent governments of the big lords in the different places, each governing according to his own ideas. It seems a wonder, and it really is a thing to wonder at. It seems to suggest that there was some power at work through it all, some one power, powerful everywhere, which kept things together and in some sort of unity and order—kept the same ideas of government and justice and so on underlying all the differences.

It seems as if there must have been some such power, for how else can we account for the fact that the society of the world did not fall all to pieces? And we know, as a fact, that there was such a power, penetrating everywhere: it was power emanating, as at the time of the Roman Empire, from Rome itself. But now it was not the power of a government with strong military forces, splendidly organised. It was the power of the Christian Church, of which Rome, with its bishop who was called the Pope, was the centre and headquarters for all the Western world.

It seems all the more wonderful that the Pope of Rome should have been able to make his power so widely felt, when we see what constant difficulties he had to encounter in the government of Rome itself. It is evident that Charlemagne himself, even at the height of his Empire, deemed that his authority would be increased if he had the Pope on his side. That is shown by his consecration at Rome, of which we have spoken before. And there is no doubt that the Pope too was very glad to have the Emperor on his side, to help him.

At the same time there was another aspect to the story, for the Pope was continually trying to make himself, as the governor of Rome, independent of the Emperor. Yet, if he became so independent as to be

without the Emperor's help, he had scarcely sufficient force at his command to oppose two other parties in Rome who were always striving for power, the nobles and the populace. A proof of this weakness of the Pope's is that on the break-up of the Empire of Charlemagne the Pope at once found himself in difficulties with these other parties in the city and its vicinity. He was able to assume to himself much of the power that had been wielded by the Emperor; but, being now without the help of the Empire, he was without defence against the nobles, who at once obtained greater power.

And, further, there were enemies without, as well as within. The Saracens at this time, that is to say in the first half of the tenth century, were in Sicily and Southern Italy and pressed up from the south, while again, as long before, tribes of the Huns threatened from the north. Both dangers were repelled, by the arms of the "barbarians" far more than by the arms of Rome, and almost at the end of this tenth century we find a "barbarian," a German, elected as Pope of Rome.

Yet, in spite of all these difficulties, and while from one moment to another the very existence of the Pope's rule in Rome, the central city of the Christian Church, seems to have been in danger, the power which went out from that centre reached far and was efficient. Europe, under the feudal system, was very disturbed, maybe, very full of fighting, but it was deeply religious. Partly it was because men were so lawless and committed so many sins that they submitted themselves so humbly to the commands and advice of the priests. They had very many sins to repent of. The Church and its priests taught that remission or absolution of sins might be gained by gifts made by the sinners to the Church. Thus a great lord or a king, to expiate his evil deeds, might build a cathedral or an abbey or give

extensive grants of land to the Church. Thus the Church grew rich.

But the Church also taught that forgiveness for sins might be gained by doing penance, that is to say by punishment and suffering; and one of the forms of this punishment which the Church advised as most efficacious was to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, the Holy City. That is a fact of which it is worth your while to make a special note in your minds, because it was out of this habit of pilgrims going to Jerusalem for the good of their souls that those great expeditions called the Crusades came to be made.

Among the many good things for which the Christian Church was working was peace. It was working for peace in a world that was at constant war, in spite of the Church's efforts. It may seem a strange thing to say, that the Crusades were partly due to the Church's wish for peace, but it is probably true that part of the reason why the Church gave them its blessing was they were a means by which Christian soldiers, instead of fighting against each other, might be united in fighting against non-Christians, against Mahommedans.

This is one reason which might have led the Church to favour the Crusades. Another was that it seemed a dreadful thing that a city so sacred as Jerusalem should be in the hands of the Saracens. Naturally the Church favoured the attempt to recover the Holy Places by the Christian powers.

Yet a third reason which brought about the first of the many Crusades was that the Emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire, in Constantinople, was being hard pressed at the moment by the Mahommedans in Asia Minor, and made a request to the Christians in the West to come to his help. The Eastern Empire had suffered heavy losses. Not only had the Saracens taken possession of its old territories of Egypt and

Africa, as well as Palestine and Syria and a large part of Asia Minor, but from the north had come raiders even to the very walls of Constantinople itself. A number of races from the north and east had taken part in these incursions—Huns, Tartars, Slavs, from the Carpathian Mountains. It is in the ninth century that we begin to hear of such a country as Russia, which was inhabited by all these races, and Russia already was beginning to stretch a hand down towards that Constantinople which she has hankered after ever since. Then that large and fertile land which is marked as Hungary in modern maps was already called by that name and had been lost to the Emperor at Constantinople. His was, in fact, an Empire restricted to a comparatively small western slice of Asia Minor, to some of the islands and to the fringes, along the northern shore of the Mediterranean, of all that it had once claimed in Greece and in what we know as Turkey in Europe. The aggression which the Emperor especially dreaded when he summoned the West to help him was aggression by the Turks, who had by this time established themselves as the chief Mahomedan power in the East.

The Turks, a people of the same kin as those Tartars who formed part of the mixed population of Russia, had come down from the east and north and settled themselves in force in the eastern part of Asia Minor. It would seem that they were a tougher and a rougher race than the Arabians, whose religion they had adopted. But the fact that they had accepted the religion founded by the Arabian Mahomet, did not save the Arabs from the attacks of these invading Turks, who dispossessed them of all their conquests in Syria, Palestine, and Egypt. Further westward it was chiefly a race of African natives, who had adopted the religion of Mahomet, with but a small contingent of any Arabian people, that conquered Spain and had its

capital city at Cordova, in that country. And a little later in the story another Mahommedan African tribe, closely akin to the conquerors of Spain, seized and kept a long slice of that southern shore of the Mediterranean as far east as the Egyptian boundary.

It is the more necessary to make a note of these divisions, because it seems to have been the way of the Crusaders and of all Christian people of that time to group together all Mahommedans, no matter of what race they were, under the common name of Saracen, which originally was applied to one tribe only of the Arabian nation. By the end of the eleventh century, when the first Crusaders went to the Holy Land, the hold of the Moors in Spain was neither as firm nor nearly as extensive as it had been. The country was divided between Christian and Moslem, the Moslem still possessing the southern part, nearer that Africa whence he had come. The fighting was continual, with results that gave now one side and now the other the advantage, but it inclined, on the whole, to favour the Christians. This was the time to which belong the splendid stories about the Cid Campeador and many other great Spanish and Christian heroes.

But while, in the West, the Christian was thus forcing the African Saracen gradually to loosen his grip on Spain, in the East the Turkish Saracen was pressing the Christian so hard as to cause the ruler of Constantinople, though still claiming the title of Eastern Emperor, to send a prayer to all Christians to come to his aid.

The conditions of the people in most parts of Europe was probably more miserable about this date, that is to say about 1100, than ever before or since. Besides the misery caused by the perpetual fighting, there was disease, in the form of a plague, which killed large numbers; and a very bad season for farming had brought great scarcity of food. Therefore when the

call went forth for volunteers to help the Christians of the East and to regain the Holy Places from the infidel, very many were ready to respond to the summons. The Crusade was preached first by a religious zealot called Peter the Hermit, and attracted the poor people who were so wretched in Europe that any change must have seemed likely to be for the better health of their bodies, quite apart from the saving of their souls. This call of the Hermit's seems to have been the summons of a man full of zeal, but of little wisdom. Constantinople, the capital of the Eastern Empire, whence the prayer for help had come, was named as the place in which the Crusaders were to collect for the attack on Palestine. Thither Peter the Hermit led his followers ; but very few survived even to reach that city. On the way across Hungary wild tribes set upon them and destroyed a great number. So that poor effort came to nothing, as it was certain that it must from the way in which it was undertaken.

But in the meantime a more orderly movement had been started, with a great Churchman, acting as the Pope's legate, at its head. So it had the Pope's blessing, and many of the great feudal lords were its leaders. There were lords of Italy, of France, of Germany, and we may note especially that there were lords of Normandy.

The Northmen had not stopped, in their sea-borne incursions, at England and the northern coasts of France. They had established themselves in parts of Spain, they had come through the Straits of Gibraltar, they had ousted, or had greatly helped in ousting, the Saracens who had taken possession of Sicily and of the south of Italy. They had set themselves up as rulers of that Italian south, with Naples as their capital. Thus enterprising, and ever further pushing, were these people from the north.

So these, too, took a part, and a leading part, in the great war for the Cross. Crusade is from the French *croissade*, which is from *croix*, a cross. You may have seen figures on tombs in churches, of knights in armour with one leg crossed over the other. This distinction of the crossed legs is only given to the figures of knights who had taken part in one or other of the Crusades.

It was in the year following the disastrous enterprise of Peter the Hermit, that these Crusaders, starting from different points in Europe, came together at Constantinople. Trouble arose then, because the Emperor of the East wished the leaders to do homage to him. That meant that any victory they might win in the Holy Land would be a victory gained for him. Homage is a word derived from *homo*, a man, and the meaning of "doing homage" was that you confessed yourself the *homo*, or man, of him to whom you did it.

Thus the Emperor desired these leading Crusaders to be his "men," in the sense that any lands and cities that they conquered should be his. That was not quite the idea which they had in their own minds, when they came to his assistance. The Emperor's view was that all Asia Minor and Palestine and other lands such as Egypt, which the Saracens had taken, really belonged to his Empire and should be given back to the Empire if the Crusaders could gain them.



A CRUSADER.

The outcome of this difference of opinion seems to have been that the leaders of the Crusade did homage, reluctantly, to the Emperor, but perhaps they had the thought in the back of their minds, as they did it, that it was an oath which they might break. However that may be, when the time came to fulfil their vow—for they won a quick and easy success over the Turks in Asia Minor and Syria—they did not give up Palestine and the Holy Places to the Emperor. A portion of Asia Minor which they regained from the Saracens was handed over to the Emperor, but as for Palestine itself, that was taken, and it was retained, by the Crusaders ; and the chief result of that first and most successful of the Crusades was that a Christian Kingdom of Jerusalem was set up, and was maintained for nearly a century—from 1097 to 1187. The name of Kingdom of Jerusalem and the title of king endured for many years more, but the kingdom then consisted of no more than a strip of the coast-line of the Levant and did not include the city of Jerusalem at all.

But though the Christians were able to hold this new kingdom in the East for nearly a hundred years, it was within less than fifty that the very important frontier city of the Eastern Empire, Edessa, in Asia Minor, was taken by the Saracens. The Emperor at once sent out another appeal to the West, and this appeal became the occasion of the second Crusade, undertaken in 1146.

It began with even brighter promise than the first ; for whereas knights were the leaders of the former, two kings, the King of France and the King of Germany, put themselves, in person, at the head of the second. But in spite of the fair promise the main result was failure. It was the occasion of some successful enterprises by the way ; and we may note that whereas the first Crusade had been almost entirely French and Norman, English, as well as Germans, took part in the

latter. Also, whereas the route taken by the first had been entirely overland, through Hungary, some of the second Crusaders, from England and Flanders, made their way to the East by sea.

In course of that sea voyage some of the soldiers of the Cross, landing up the Tagus from their ships, took the city of Lisbon from the Moors, and this capture was the beginning of the little kingdom of Portugal. Thence the force went upon its voyage eastward.

In the north of Germany some of the forces assembled for the Crusade never went very far from home. They seem to have received the permission of the Pope to fight against a tribe, called Wends, on their eastern frontier, instead of against the Saracens; and seeing that these Wends were heathen, this might perhaps be regarded in the light of a Holy War no less than that in Asia Minor.

It is possible to state very shortly the achievements of the forces that did get to the East—they achieved nothing at all. The two kings seem to have been jealous of each other. They acted separately, with no joint action, and were defeated in turn. They returned home with no glory, and left the Kingdom of Jerusalem in a worse plight than before, just because of their failure, after such preparations and expectations. The Saracen might well think that if this was all that the West, under its two greatest kings, could do, they need not be much afraid.

Therefore they pressed continually closer and closer about the Kingdom of Jerusalem. The Christians held their own, with a success that is rather surprising, until the reign of the great Saladin. Until his reign the Saracens in Asia Minor and in the country east of the Jordan had not acted in unison with the Saracens in Egypt. Saladin brought all together; so that now the situation of this Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem was even worse than we saw the position

of Palestine to be in the very early days of the great story. Then it had lain between the two powerful empires of Egypt and Babylonia. Now it was lying like an island in the midst of a sea of enemies all fighting, not against each other, but united to fight against it.

And then this Jerusalem, taken from the Saracens in 1099, was by them retaken in 1187.

We may be sure that the Christians in the East could not possibly have held their own against the Saracens, as they did during these years, if they had not been constantly receiving reinforcements from the West. History speaks to us of certain definite dates for the first, second, third Crusades, and so on, but we also have to imagine a continual going to and from the East of knights with larger or smaller followings. In this way the strength of the garrisons in the kingdom were maintained, and in this way happened that continual bringing of Eastern ideas to the West, which was really of more importance in the making of this greatest of all stories than any of the victories won or cities taken.

CHAPTER XVI

THE SLAVS IN EASTERN EUROPE

THUS I have tried to give a picture in outline—a cinematograph, or moving picture—of the world after the break up of Charlemagne's Empire. We see the Turks pressing up against the Eastern Empire in Asia Minor, with the result that the Emperor appeals to the West, and that the first Crusade establishes, for nearly a hundred years, the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. African Mahommedans have possession of the strip of North Africa running from Egypt—Egypt itself being held by the Turks—till they meet another Mahommedan African people which has possession of the southern part of Spain. That same power had the whole of the Spanish peninsula in its grip a little earlier, but its own divisions, of Arabs, Africans, and Syrians, made it weak, and it was broken as soon as it came against any organised force. Then in Italy we see that the Pope, aided by the Emperors and giving them the aid of the growing power of the Church in return, is on the whole establishing his temporal power in Rome more and more firmly. In the south of Italy and in Sicily the enterprising Normans drive out the Saracens and take possession. Northward, the great territory which, together with Italy, had been Charlemagne's, has been split into the two large divisions, the kingdoms of France and of Germany. But in these so-called kingdoms the king was at this time only a little more powerful than his lords, the barons and big

landowners. The feudal system prevailed, and the king was constantly engaged with the hard task of keeping his feudal lords in order. It was disorder, rather than order, that was the rule all over the unhappy world. England fared a little better, thanks to the Channel which cut it off and made its conditions different from those of the Continent. But now it has been conquered by the Norman, and we have to see how that conquest had the result, for a very long while, of counteracting the effect of the Channel as a separating barrier. England was soon caught up into the continental turmoil.

We have to see how that came to pass. But there is still one side or corner of the picture which we have left rather blank, and we had best get that corner filled before we come to consider the part that England played in the continental trouble. It is that corner which is occupied by the large stretch of territory on the eastern fringe of Charlemagne's Empire, from the southern shores of the Baltic right down to Constantinople and the boundaries of the Eastern Empire.

You may have noticed that in the accounts of the Crusades—the first and the second, which are all that have come into our story as yet—I mentioned two names which had not appeared before, Hungary and the Wends. The first was the name of a country through which the Crusaders went to reach Constantinople; the second was the name of a heathen tribe against which certain of the knights who had been enrolled for the second Crusade obtained the sanction of the Pope to go, instead of against the Saracen.

These Wends were a tribe or branch of a race that appears to have increased in numbers very rapidly and, from a small territory to the north of the Carpathian mountains, to have spread over all that large tract just described from the Baltic to the neighbourhood of Constantinople. It was a race of people called Slavs,

and even to-day it is thought to number more than any other of the races of man. It is not the first time that it has been mentioned in this greatest of all stories. We saw, in the first volume, that a large number of the serfs under the Roman Empire, especially in the East, were of this people. So large were their numbers that it is from their Latin name *servus* that we get our word "slave," which we use as a translation of *servus*. These Slavonic "serfs" were members of the Slav race who had been taken prisoners in battle.

The Slavonic people from the East were constantly, as their numbers grew, and perhaps as they too were pressed by Huns and Mongolians from further East again, pressing in upon the Gothic, the Germanic tribes; and now it was against one of the Slav tribes, these Wends, that the knights of Northern Germany received leave to go on Crusade. They took to themselves the name of Knights of the Sword.

There were several of these bodies, or societies, at a later date than this, who bound themselves together by vows, like the vows which the monks took, and lived under one rule. They were formed, like the monkish orders, for the advancement of the Christian religion, but these Military Orders—the Knights Templar and the Knights Hospitaller were perhaps the best known of them—enforced religion with the sword as well as with the gospel-preaching, and were always ready to fight on the Christian side against the pagans on the boundaries of Christendom.



A KNIGHT TEMPLAR.

Just at this moment, then, these Knights of the Sword, who were afterwards amalgamated with the Knights of the Teutonic Order, went, not against the Saracen but against the Wends. Now Wends was the name that the Germans gave to all the Slavs, from this one tribe of the Slavs which was called Wends. In like manner the name of Teutons was, and sometimes still is, given to all Germans and even to all peoples derived from the Gothic tribes, though originally it was the name of one only of these tribes. And so now, with these Teutons and Slavs thus opposing and thrusting at each other, we come into touch with one of the great world struggles that has been going on ever since, and was one of the causes of the Great War—the opposition of Teuton and Slav. It is the opposition of German and Russian, for most of the great population of Russia is Slavonic—that is, made up of Slavs—and Russia became the name of most of the immense territory occupied by the Slavs. It is said that the name of Russia had its origin in three great leaders of men who came from a province called Rus, in Sweden. If that be so, it appears that they again were some of those masterful Northmen, or Normans, whom we have seen taking the lead whenever they came in any number.

The name of the country may have come from these men of Rus. That is one story. But it is perhaps doubtful whether it may not be rather from “rothsmen,” meaning “oarsmen,” that is “sea-farers”; which is a name likely to be given to any of those northern sea-rovers. It is not often easy to know whether this or the other body of sea-faring Northmen came from Sweden or Norway or Denmark; for these lands were at different times united under one government, or under two, or, again, separated, and each with its own government; and for a time, as at the very moment when Canute was King of England,

Denmark was united with the others and was the ruler in the union.

But there seems to be general agreement among historians that either the men of Rus, or the people called Rothsmen, who became rulers of Russia and gave the country its name, came from Sweden.

The Slavs, however, occupied territory outside what came to be called Russia. The Kingdom of Poland was theirs; and it is chiefly by their descendants that those various countries designated to-day by the name of the "Balkan States" are peopled. So the Slavs held a vast country reaching from the Baltic almost down to the Mediterranean along the Eastern boundary of the Western Empire.

But even as early as the sixth century there was a large slice cut out of this Slavonic territory, formed of that land which is now called Hungary. The first conquerors, who thus thrust in and divided the Slavs of the south from those in the north, were a people called Avars, and they, with a certain force of the Huns, together gave to the country the name of Hungary. In the next century we find that the Germans are turning against the Avars, and that Hungary itself is included in the Empire of Charlemagne. But after Charlemagne's death, when his great possessions fell into hands less able to hold them, Hungary is yet again invaded and conquered by a people from the north-east, called Magyars, and what makes that conquest so notable for us is that the Magyars are the dominating race in Hungary to-day. On every side, and in every corner, of the world picture, in fact, we are now beginning to see States and kingdoms and populations settling down into the places and conditions in which we are able to recognise them as we look at a modern map.

These Magyars, then, a people allied to the Finns, of Finland, and coming from the east of the Ural

mountains, conquered Hungary towards the close of the ninth century, and have been there ever since. They were pagans, but in the eleventh century they became Christians, and members of the Church of Rome. That is a point to notice, that they joined the Church of which the Pope was the head. The Slavs, that is to say all the peoples to the east of Germany, with the exception of the Magyars, as they accepted Christianity became members of the Greek Church, which had its chief bishop, called the Patriarch, in Constantinople, the capital city of the Eastern Empire.

And now, under the Western Empire, had come into power and been raised to the importance of a duchy the State called Austria. Austria means "Eastern." It was the eastern "mark," that is to say "march" or "boundary," of the Empire. It "marched with," that is, was next to, Hungary and some of the Slav country, and was therefore a kind of fortress State against the enemies of Germany. Thus its importance grew. It had its ancient city, now called Vienna, on the great river, the Danube, which brought much trade and commerce into the land. The valley of the Danube, moreover, was, as you may easily understand by looking at the map of Europe, the route which folk would be likely to follow between the centre of Germany and Constantinople, which was the meeting-place for the Crusaders.

Therefore you may now see how it was that Hungary had to be named as the country through which the Crusaders went, and also you may see how there come into the story the Wends (often an alternative name, as used by the Germans, for the Slavs) against whom went those Knights of the Sword who were at first enrolled with the idea that they should go to the Holy Places in Palestine.

CHAPTER XVII

NORMANS AND ANGEVINS

THE Normans who conquered England were far more different from the English whom they conquered than the Danes, under Canute, had been. And yet Danes and Normans, both being "Northmen," were closely akin. But we have to note that the conquering Normans came, not from the north, but from the south from Normandy; and some years of residence there, among the Franks or French, had changed them. Moreover, we have to remember that, according to the estimates of historians, only about one-third of the force with which Duke William came to England was really Norman. The larger part was of Franks and any others whom the adventure attracted or whom William had hired to aid him.

The conquest must have made very much more difference to the upper classes of the English people than to the lower. Many lords were killed at that Battle of Hastings which decided England's fate. In their places the conqueror put his own barons and army leaders, thus rewarding them, at no expense to himself, for their services. Norman lords soon superseded English lords throughout the land, but the peasants, and also the townsfolk, would go on with their lives much as before. The English system was not, as we have seen, so different from the completely feudal system of France that the lower vassals would know much difference in the change from one to the other.

The English regarded the land as belonging in the first instance to the people ; the Normans regarded it as belonging to the king. But in the practical result this different point of view did not count for much, because the English had already lost all the land rights which had once been valuable to them. We traced the way in which that happened a chapter or two back.

It is curious to note how the Norman influence made itself felt indoors, within the house, more than out-of-doors. The simpler things, which all would use, kept their old names, the Saxon names. It is the words denoting things belonging to the more cultured life that come from the Norman. Thus sheep, oxen, deer, are Saxon names of the animals which the English would use or hunt ; but when these creatures are cooked and brought to table they appear there under the French names of *mouton* or mutton, *bœuf* or beef, and *venaison* or venison.

Mention of the deer and the venison suggests one particular in which the Norman Conquest probably did restrict the peasants' rights. There is evidence to show that the Normans were not the inventors of those game laws which forbade, under cruel penalties, any hunting in the woodlands. It is certain that this was no new thing of Norman invention, because there are the Forest Laws, as they are called, that is to say, laws for the preservation of the game and the timber, as early as the Saxon Heptarchy. There is also a code of very cruel game laws attributed to Canute. It has been suggested that this code was a forgery invented by the Norman kings to excuse the severity of their game laws. What seems perhaps most probable is that there were severe laws in existence before the Normans came, but that the Normans were the first to apply the laws very strictly. The statements about the numbers of villages and cultivated fields that William Rufus destroyed in order to make himself a hunting estate in

the New Forest are almost certainly exaggerated misstatements. We must remember that all the earliest records that we have were written by monks or other clerics. Now the Church was often at variance with the lay authority and with the authority of the king. It was constantly trying to get more and more power into its own hands. Therefore all the stories are likely to have been written in a spirit antagonistic to the laity and in favour of the Church and all the Church's interests.

Just to show you the character of the game laws in those days and also to show how the law imposed different penalties on different classes, I will cite one or two sections from the code attributed to Canute.

“23. If any free or unfree man shall kill any beast of the Forest, he shall for the first pay double (*i.e.* double of ten shillings), for the second as much, and the third time shall forfeit as much as he is worth to the King.

“24. But if either of them by coursing or hunting shall force a royal beast (which the English call a staggon) to pant and be out of breath, the freeman shall lose his natural liberty for one year, the other his for two years; but if a bondman do the like, he shall be reckoned for an outlaw (what the English call a friendless man).

“25. But if any of them shall kill such a royal beast, the freeman shall lose his freedom, the other his liberty, and the bondman his life.”

Human life and liberty were cheap, but the value of the King's deer was high.

I have said that England, by reason of the Norman Conquest, was caught up into the political affairs of the Continent. This was not merely because Normandy was a part of that Continent. It was chiefly because of the relationship or connection by marriage of the

Rufus, by name Robert, was far away. He had gone on the first Crusade. Henry, the younger son, seized the English throne, and married an English wife. They had no son, but they had a daughter named Matilda. This Matilda then, on the death of her father Henry I., had this clear and distinct claim to the throne of England.

But there was also in the world, and ready to take a crown if he could get one, a certain Stephen, who was the son of a daughter of William the Conqueror. Stephen therefore, as the Conqueror's grandson, had a claim to the throne.

The barons of England seem to have given their support now to one and now to the other of these two claimants, bringing their forces to the help of the side which, at the moment, was getting the worse of the struggle. Their idea seems to have been to keep the trouble going in order to make their own power greater.

At length the whole country wearied of the fighting, and a peace was made on the following terms: that Stephen should have the Crown during his life, and that at his death it should go to the son of Matilda. This son's name was Henry, and he did, in due course, succeed to the Crown, on Stephen's death, as Henry II.

Now, notice whom Matilda, his mother, had married. She had married first the Emperor, Henry V., and secondly, the Count of Anjou. Her son Henry inherited Anjou from her, and married Eleanor, who was heiress of Aquitaine and Poitou, in the south of France, and was the divorced wife of the King of France. By his marriage, therefore, Henry became lord of Aquitaine. Then King Stephen died, and this same Henry, our Henry II., had England, Normandy, Anjou, and Aquitaine. That is to say his possessions on the Continent were more extensive than his English inheritance and also were more extensive than the lands of the King of France himself.

Thus was England taken up, as we may say, into the continental system and became a part of it. She became an actor in the struggles which such a situation as this was evidently sure to cause between the King of England, with all these French possessions, and the King of France. It was a contest between the Capets, the Capetian Kings of France, and the Angevins, the kings of England who had that name from the important lordship of Anjou, which belonged to them; and the contest continued from the middle of the twelfth century almost to the middle of the thirteenth—say from 1150 to 1240. In the course of that struggle a very remarkable, and a very remarkably different, change took place in France and in England in the power of the kings of the two countries over their barons.

In France the king gradually gained in power until, in the long reign of Philip Augustus, which stretched over the last twenty years of the twelfth century and the first twenty-three of the thirteenth, the king became all-powerful.

In England, on the contrary, where the king had been not nearly so much in the hands of the barons as the early Capetian kings of France had been, the barons gained more and more power until, in 1215, we find King John compelled by his barons to allow his seal to be affixed to Magna Carta. This charter gave Englishmen the beginnings of their liberty at the very time when the King of France was effectually establishing the autocratic power of the Crown over all French subjects.

Henry II., although his kingdom was so extensive in England and on the Continent, expanded it yet more widely by a complete and effective conquest of Ireland, and also by receiving homage from the King of Scotland, whom his armies had defeated at Alnwick and made prisoner.

We have seen very little of Scotland in the course of the great story, and little of Ireland since we saw the priests of the Irish Church coming westward and converting the heathen to Christianity. Scotland had for centuries, from the time of the Romans in Britain and probably long before that, been a troublesome neighbour to England on the north boundary. We have seen that boundary shifted once or twice as the forces on one side or on the other prevailed. But Scotland, in her attacks upon England, never succeeded in penetrating very far south, and therefore did not take any very important part, at that time, in the making of the story. And now Henry had the Scottish king prisoner and doing homage to him. That homage gave the King of England the position of feudal lord over the King of Scotland. But feudal vassals, as we have seen, were not always quite subservient to their lords. The Scottish kings were no exception, and they acted very much as if they were no less independent than before.

But the conquest of Ireland was different, and complete. Ireland, lying out in the western sea, had escaped the incursions of the Saxons, the Danes, and the Normans that had fallen upon England. Sea-rovers had constantly harried her coasts, as they harried every coast within reach of their sails and oars, and made some settlements there; but the island as a whole had not been overrun by any invaders since the coming of the Celts.

In Ireland, thus cut off from the rest of the world, the Church went its own way in less dependence on the Pope at Rome than any other in all the Western world. In the Eastern Empire and in all the vast territories of the Slavs the Patriarch at Constantinople was looked up to as the head of what came, in later days, to be known as the Greek Church. It conducted its services rather differently from the Roman Church,

and there were some differences in the doctrines of the two. The Church of Constantinople was too strong for the Church of Rome to prevail against it in the East, but Rome claimed universal spiritual authority in the West.

The Pope, moreover, by virtue of a before-mentioned deed signed by Constantine, and called the Donation, or gift, of Constantine, was reputed to have authority over all islands. It did not matter that this famous Donation, or the deed by which it was supposed to be instituted, was strongly suspected to be a forgery, nor did it matter that even if it really were drawn up by Constantine and signed by him, his right to give away authority over "islands" was not quite clear, although he were the emperor of the world. No matter. This gift of "islands," though the document, or deed, was doubtful, was destined to play an important part in the world's story when that story began to be concerned with the discoveries of new continents and islands.

For the moment it served to authorise the Pope to give our Henry II. a mandate to conquer Ireland, and to bring its Church into subservience to Rome. The Pope was Adrian IV., the first, and the only, Englishman who ever held that highest spiritual honour. His behests were willingly and easily obeyed. Ireland, divided between several local chieftains, or kings, did not resist Henry's armies long; and so became subjugated to England. And by thus bringing Ireland into the fold of the Church Henry made some atonement to Rome for that infamous murder, in Canterbury Cathedral, of the Archbishop Thomas, sometimes called à Becket, which was done by some of his knights who thought to give him pleasure by its doing, even if he had not directly bidden it.

The differences between Henry and his archbishop had risen out of that question of "investitures," that is of who should have the appointments to the high

offices in the Church (whether those appointments should be made by the Crown or should be kept in the hands of the clerical party), which was the cause of much trouble, and actual fighting, in many lands. The solution of the trouble, as has been noted already, was found in the arrangement that the Church should appoint its own officials for all spiritual offices, but that for its earthly possessions it should do homage to the sovereign of the country in which they lay. The appointment of the Pope himself was put into the hands of a College of Cardinals: that is, of high Church officials.

Henry's successor on the English throne was his eldest surviving son Richard, surnamed *Cœur-de-Lion* for his gallantry in war.

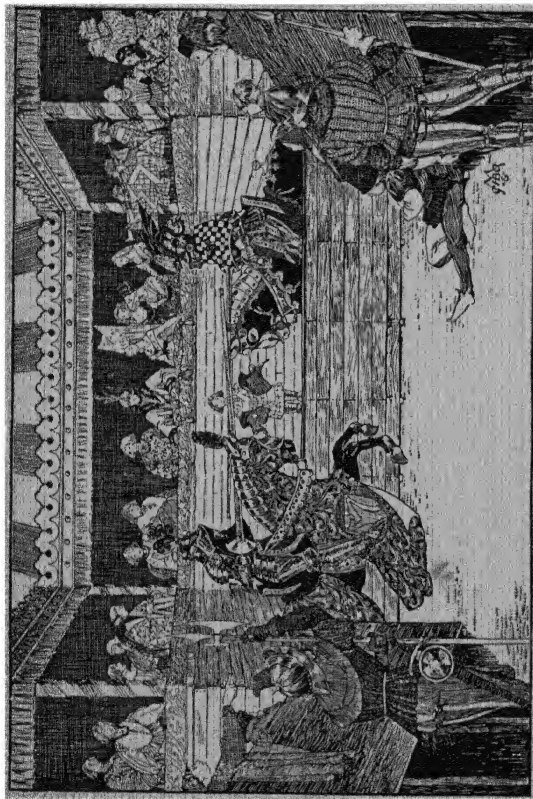
We have come now to the years of which the great story has been told to us in very picturesque language. It seems to be an age of heroes, and of heroes inspired by the highest motives. It is the time of that third Crusade in which the kings of England and of France combined with the emperor to try to win back Jerusalem from Saladin, that great Moslem ruler who held Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and the Mediterranean shore of Africa nearly as far west as Tunis. Westward again African Moslems held the southern half of Spain. There were gallant actions to be performed on behalf of the Cross both in East and West.

It was the age of those wandering minstrels the troubadours of the *Langue d'oc* in the south of France, the *trouvères* of the *Langue d'oïl* in the north of France, the singers of the *Lingua di si* in Italy. Each of those was so called from the word used by the people of the locality for our English word "yes." In the "oil" we have the origin of the modern French "oui." In England we have seen that there were wandering minstrels. In Germany there were the same, by the name of Minnesingers.

These Romance languages, as they were called, of the *Langue d'oïl* and the *Langue d'oc*, were the result of the mixture, in the different localities, of the Gothic, or German language with the Roman, the Latin. The *trouvères* of Northern France, like the minnesingers and the English minstrels, were singers or reciters of stories. Sir Walter Scott's "Lay of the Last Minstrel" may give us an idea of the tales that they recited. But, at this moment of our story, say the end of the twelfth century, we are in the midst of the age of chivalry, as it is called. It was the age when the knight thought it right to devote all his services to some lady of his love whose colours—probably a knot of ribbon which she had worn—he carried conspicuously. It was the age of tournaments, which were encounters between mounted and heavily armed knights held before some great lord's castle. It was an age too of constant fighting, some of which was in the sacred name of the Cross against that Crescent which was the badge and the sign of the Saracens. So these rhymesters had plenty of stories for their telling.

There was a whole series of tales about the Court of King Arthur in Britain, some of which Tennyson has put for us into modern verse in his "Idylls of the King." There was a series, too, about the Court of Charlemagne and his paladins, as his knights were called. Many, indeed most, of the stories, which may have had some historical and real incident underlying them, were so overlaid with invention that it is quite impossible to tell where truth leaves off and fiction begins. The knights are of quite incredible stature and strength, and the feats they perform are far too good and great to be true.

We ask ourselves, then, seeing that we cannot accept these stories as true in all their detail, whether or no they are so far true that they do give us an accurate idea of what life was like in those days :



A JOUST BETWEEN KNIGHTS IN THE LISTS.

(From *The History of Everyday Things* (Quennell), by permission of Messrs. B. T. Batsford, Ltd.

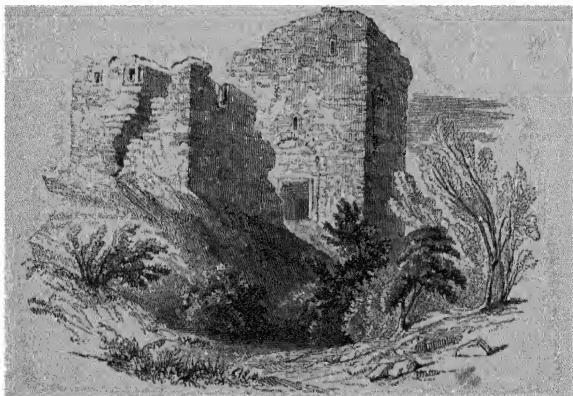
whether knights-errant—that is to say, knights “erring” or wandering—really did go about, as they are represented to us, seeking adventures.

Certainly many of the adventures of which the stories tell us cannot be believed. The knights slay for us such creatures of fairy-tale as dragons and the like. But still there is no reason why something of the kind may not have been true. We have to imagine a country thinly populated and cultivated only in parts. We have to remember, too, that these knights, and their horses also, were covered with armour, so that no weapons of the villeins or men of low degree could hurt them much. Moreover, the reputation of the knights made them very bold against the men of less degree, and made those men of humbler class the more timid and humble. Therefore it is not altogether beyond belief that there may have been much of this going about from castle to castle by wandering knights in armour, and the wastes and woodlands were wild places, where wild beasts and yet wilder outlawed men might be met with. The tales of the minstrels had some foundation; but it is probable that what they were interested in was not so much to tell their audience true stories, as to tell them stories which should amuse them and thrill them.

That is the kind of story that the singers of England, Germany, and Northern France told; but the singers of the south of France, the troubadours of the *Langue d’oc*, were not so much singers or tellers of stories, as singers of love songs. They could sing hymns of hate, too, against those whom they disliked, and this gave several of them much power. Some were of high rank. They went from castle to castle, providing entertainment in return for the amusement and delight which their verses gave. Remember that the castles were poorly lighted, after dark, that there were few books and few people able to read what books

there were, and you may realise that the troubadour would be very welcome.

“Troubadour” and “trouvère” are both from the French root which we still see in French “trouver,” “to find.” They were finders or inventors of songs and stories. With them, in their company sometimes, travelled a lower class of musician and entertainer, who did conjuring tricks, played antics, as well as performing on musical instruments. He was called



RICHARD CŒUR-DE-LION'S PRISON AT TRIEFELS,
RHENISH BAVARIA.

a “joglar,” or “jocular,” a joking person. Our modern form of the word is “juggler.”

With these shows and performances of the minstrels and the juggler, and with dancing, wrestling, and cruel sport like bear-baiting and cock-fighting, the people passed their leisure.

Now our King Richard, of the lion-heart, was reckoned as a troubadour. He was a verse maker and a singer. That Crusade on which he went with the

King of France had a certain measure of success. It did not gain back Jerusalem from Saladin ; but it did win towns on the coasts of Palestine, and it ended in an arrangement with Saladin that the Christians should retain these coast towns and that Christian peaceful pilgrims should be allowed to go to Jerusalem without being ill-treated.

But the Crusade had other results also. Richard appears to have taken a more leading part in it than the King of France liked. The King of France returned from the Crusade before Richard. He found that Richard's brother, John, had conspired with the English barons against Richard, and he very gladly gave his aid to John to strengthen the conspiracy.

Richard, probably taking too much upon himself, in his lion-hearted way, had offended other people besides the King of France. One of these was the Duke of Austria. Clearly Richard realised that he was not a very popular person, for he disguised himself and tried to gain his way home from the Crusade undetected. But he was found out as he was going through Austria. He was brought before the Duke and imprisoned. Later the Duke of Austria handed him over to the emperor, and he was imprisoned in a castle in Germany.

There, according to the story, he was overheard, singing a song of his own making, by a youth who had at one time been his page and was passing by that castle in which he was held prisoner. However that be, it became known that the King of England, returning from fighting for the Cross, was being held shamefully a prisoner, and the indignation of the Pope and of the greater part of Christendom was fierce. Under threat of being excommunicated from the blessings of the Church, and on payment of a large ransom, the emperor released King Richard, who hastened back to England.

The barons had been conspiring with John, but John had none of the ability to be leader of a great conspiracy. The barons, moreover, had learnt from of old how to make their own power greater by aiding now one claimant to the throne and now another. As soon as Richard appeared they deserted John's very wrongful cause and went back to their proper allegiance to Richard. John had no hereditary right to the Crown, even on Richard's death, for John was the fifth son of Henry II. and Henry's fourth son had himself a son, and this son, by all the laws of heredity, had a claim on the Crown before John, his uncle.

But what we call the laws of heredity were not followed very strictly in those days, and we have seen again and again how ready a king was to portion out to his sons parts of his kingdom. It was a practice which naturally led to fighting and to dissension.

Henry had signified before his death the division that he intended to make, and his sons began to fight and intrigue for their portions while he was still alive. Philip, King of France, seems to have been ready to support any claimant against the King of England. While Richard was king Philip supported John against him. As soon as John became king he turned against John, and John crossed the Channel to fight Philip in order to try to maintain the English sovereignty over Henry II.'s continental possessions.

But the dukes of the duchies and the counts of the provinces favoured Philip rather than John. Their quick change from the English to the French allegiance shows how little real unity there was under a feudal king. John was a feeble leader, and the result of some months of fighting was that he surrendered nearly all the territory on the Continent held by his grandfather. The kings of England ceased to be Angevins, that is to say ceased to hold the lordship of Anjou. The name of Plantagenet, from the branch

of the *planta genista*, or broom, which they took for their badge and wore in their caps, superseded the name of Angevin for their dynasty.

You might think that now, when the French king was thus establishing himself as lord of nearly all that we call France, the kingdom was beginning to settle down into much the same condition, and with much the same boundaries, as we see it. As a matter of fact it had to be rent apart again, and again re-united, before that settlement could begin. You will do well to note that one of the most powerful of the lords who helped Philip in his fight with John was the Duke of Burgundy. This name of Burgundy was brought into the great story at a very early date, by a Gothic tribe called the Burgundi coming westward with the others. It is a name that remains to this day. But no other name of a territory has stood for such different areas, or has had such different significance. It was, of course, part of Charlemagne's Empire, and now it was held as a fief of the King of France. We shall see Burgundy coming to great power before the story's end, but for the moment the French king is pre-eminent over his lords.

The position between king and barons in England is very different, for the barons are there forcing the king to the acceptance of Magna Carta. By the provisions of that charter or agreement no Englishman shall henceforth be imprisoned without trial; and already travelling justices have been instituted to go through the land and conduct trials.

In England the foundations are being laid for liberty. On the Continent the foundations are being laid for that despotic power of the Crown which is only to be broken by the catastrophe of the French Revolution.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE STRENGTH AND THE WEAKNESS OF ROME

ONE chief effect of the growing power of the French king over his nobility was the gradual breaking up of the feudal system throughout the greater part of France. Philip sent bailiffs to collect his taxes, instead of receiving them through the hands of the lords, and we may look on this as a striking sign of the changing times. He formed, moreover, the beginnings of a standing army. In the extreme south of France, in Aquitaine and Provence, the feudal conditions lasted longer, but there, too, feudalism was crushed out after the so-called Crusade against the Albigenses, the people of Albi in the south of France, who held certain religious views at variance with those of the Church. Moreover, they professed themselves offended by the life and manners of the monastic orders and other clerics. It was the very offence which caused the Reformation later; but these would-be reformers of Albi were too few to win success, and their so-called "heresy" was stamped out with cruel severity.

The troubadours, together with the poetic language of "oc," passed away for ever with the feudal society which had made their manner of life possible. We have come to some very dark pages of our story. In the course of the perpetual fights between the feudal lords themselves, and between combinations of the lords and the king, the one side or the other, finding its own

forces failing, hired bands of mercenary soldiers to aid them. When the little wars were over, these hirelings got their dismissal. Perhaps they did, or perhaps they did not, get their pay. If not, they were likely to take its equivalent, and more, from any that had not the force to withstand them, and even if they were paid for past service, what were they to do on their dismissal? What they did was to wander up and down the country, offering their service to any who cared to hire it, and in the meantime supporting themselves by high-handed robbery and violence.

The Scandinavian nations and the Swiss furnished most of these mercenaries, and they were the scourge and terror of all Europe in the Middle Ages. It is very largely the insecurity of life and property due to their numbers and cruelties that so darkens the record of this period of the story.

This particular trouble was one from which the island position of England kept her fortunately free, but she had her own troubles, more than enough. The English barons, in their disgust at their treatment by John, had invited the son of King Philip of France to come over and claim the English throne. He actually was in England, with a French army, at the time of John's death; but a heavy defeat at Lincoln sent him home again.

John's death, in fact, seems to have caused the support of the barons to swing back yet again to the rightful heir to the Crown. Amongst other degradations which he had brought on his country John had sworn fealty to the Pope for his possession of England and Ireland. Our islands had, therefore, in theory, become a possession of the Pope held by the English king as his vassal, and few things in the whole of our great story are more remarkable than the power which the Popes continued to wield over all Europe, except its eastern fringe, at the very time when the position of the Popes

themselves was so very insecure at Rome that we actually find them, not only unable to enforce their authority in the city, but now and then compelled to fly from it for their own personal safety.

It is very interesting to see what happened in the country which we now call Italy, because it was something that was rather different from that which happened elsewhere. It was different just because there was this contest between the Pope and the Emperor going on all the while, complicating the already difficult position caused by the feudal system.

It is necessary, for the understanding of what happened, that we should free our minds of any idea of a single country, a unity, called Italy, as we know Italy now. There was no such idea in men's minds at the time reached by our story, and we can understand what happened much better if we can get back to their point of view.

For them there was the Emperor, with his very extensive but rather vague claim over a good deal of what Charlemagne had made his own. Then the feudal system had created what were practically independent provinces in the north of Italy as elsewhere. And then there came in the Pope, the power of the Church. And the power of the Church had its principal political influence, as regards Italy, in this : that just as at Rome the Pope, who was originally no more than the Bishop of Rome, had come to have almost, if not quite, sovereign power in the city and its neighbourhood, so too in other cities the bishops began to exercise, not so much sovereign power as the power of chief magistrates in addition to their own spiritual power. Important cities, like Florence, Milan, and Pisa, claimed an independence which the Emperor found it his best policy to concede to them. They were fortified with walls which the inhabitants were well able to defend at need. The feudal lords

at the same time had their castles in the country, outside the towns.

There had been trouble and even war about the "investitures," that is to say the appointments to the high offices of the Church; and when this was settled, it went far to free the Church from the civil authority, but at the same time it largely freed the civil power from the Church. The bishops were succeeded by civil officers, called consuls, as rulers in the cities. Then the feudal lords began to come into the cities and live within the walls, and as they were the richest and probably the most able men, they began to be chosen by the citizens as the chief officers. From that to the establishment of themselves as tyrants and despots in the cities—enlightened and art-loving despots, generally—the step was short. Often the chief families were at deadly feud with each other for years and years. Remember the Montagues and Capulets, of whom we read in Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet," in Verona.

City also fought against city about claims on territory, rights of way on roads and rivers, and many other points. And then came a threat from without which forced the cities of Northern Italy to come together and form a compact, or combination, known as the Lombard League. The threat came from that Emperor Frederick Barbarossa (*i.e.* Red-beard) who was Emperor at the date of that not altogether fortunate third Crusade in which King Richard of the Lion Heart took a leading part. The settlement, in 1122, of the trouble about the investitures, had put the appointment of the Pope into the hands of an Italian College of Cardinals, as we have noticed already, whereas he had hitherto been appointed by a German Emperor. There had been the rather ridiculous position of the Emperor appointing the Pope and the Pope anointing and consecrating the Emperor. And now,

although the Pope and Emperor had been of much help to each other in the years before, the Pope from this time forward began to take his stand as an Italian, appointed by Italians, and thus to be in opposition to the German Emperor. The Italians, besides, had been largely increasing in population all these years.

The Italians, moreover, and especially the great cities of North Italy, like Milan and Florence, had been growing more and more independent. Several of the emperors had not paid them much attention, but this Frederick the Red-beard was more aggressive than his predecessors. He attempted to assert a sovereignty like that of the Carolingian emperors—that is, the emperors of Charles's dynasty—over Italy, both north and south. It was the cities of the north, the Lombard cities, that he would naturally encounter first, and these, by forming themselves into this Lombard League, proved too strong for him. They fought him, they forced him to give up his attempt to bring them again into subjection under the German imperial rule. He tried again and again, but again and again they beat him. In its immediate purpose the League had this success; but it did not bring the States belonging to it under one government. They still remained independent of each other, and after Frederick had withdrawn and the need for union was not pressing they went back to their old feuds and fighting among themselves. Besides these smaller differences, there arose a constant and large division throughout all Italy between the two parties that had the names of Guelph and Ghibelline respectively. Originally these had been names of German families—of the Welfs of Bavaria and of the Waiblingen of Swabia—but in course of time, in Italy, they lost all their first meaning. Guelph came to mean the democratic party, favouring the rule of the people, and with this party the Pope was identified. The Ghibellines were for the rule of the

high-born rich under the sovereignty of the Emperor. A little later we find the great families of Orsini and Colonna opposed as leaders of Guelf and Ghibelline respectively. There was this constant unrest, but Italy was not seriously troubled again by the claims of the Emperor for thirty years after the death of the red-bearded Frederick. After that interval another Frederick, grandson of the Red-beard, became Emperor, and he again tried to impress his sovereignty over these cities. He had some successes at the start, but in the end he was repulsed quite as decidedly as his grandfather.

As the result of this last defeat of the imperial force, a permanent treaty—a treaty which actually did last—was drawn up defining the rights of the Emperor, and limiting them very narrowly, over Italy. The cities of the League were ensured in their practically complete independence; and a like independence was given to the Tuscan city of Florence though she was not of the League. But still it was as separate city States that their independence was defined. There was still no unity of government.

Now among the cities of the Lombard League, as it was originally formed, Venice was included. It is curious, however, that the name of Venice does not appear in the treaty made with Frederick Barbarossa.

If you will look at the map of Italy you will see, on either side of its long leg, two cities that were great seaports—on the western side Genoa and on the eastern side Venice. Most of the cities of the north of Italy are inland cities. These two, exceptionally, are on the sea.

But the importance of the two seaports differed greatly, just because they were on opposite sides of the long leg. Venice, looking eastward, was the port to which came, most naturally and easily, all the merchandise and traffic from the East. Through

Venice it was distributed throughout the West. This fact gave Venice a great position. It also incited the Venetians to be great sea-goers and great merchants. They became both enterprising and rich. They had a considerable navy. They became more powerful than any other of the States of Italy ; and just because this eastward-facing position made their interests rather different from those of the rest, they therefore came to stand rather apart from the others. Their form of government was rather different. It was perhaps better adapted for a State in which the great men were merchants and shipowners. This difference may possibly account for the name of Venice not appearing in the treaty with the Emperor Frederick Red-beard.

Venice, thus powerful already, became far the greatest naval power in the Mediterranean as a result of the fourth Crusade. Really this so-called Crusade was not directed by the Church at all. It was more of a commercial undertaking than a spiritual adventure. Egypt, which was in the hands of the Moslems, was its object, therefore its forces had to go by sea. Venice furnished money and transport.

Just at this moment the rightful Emperor of the East had been dethroned by his brother, who had usurped his power. The Crusaders, even from the time of the first Crusade, never thought that they met with fair treatment from the Eastern Emperor, for whom they fought. Perhaps they were glad enough now to take up the cause of the rightful but deposed Emperor. Venice, moreover, had her own private cause of offence with Constantinople. The result was that the Crusade was turned aside from its first object, which was Cairo, in Egypt, and was directed against Constantinople. Constantinople fell to their attack in 1204. Baldwin, Count of Flanders, a Norman by race and one of the leaders of the Crusade, was appointed Emperor

of the East, and Venice, for her share, was given the nominal sovereignty over some of the islands in the Mediterranean, thus further increasing her power. Frederick II., the grandson of Barbarossa, had come to the imperial throne with claims to an empire scarcely less than that of Charlemagne himself. For besides being Emperor, and thus King of Germany, he still had that claim on the Kingdom of Italy which the emperors had not renounced, even if they could not enforce it. His mother had been heiress of the Norman Kingdom of Naples and Sicily, on which also, therefore, he had a valid claim. Rome lay between these two territories. Moreover, this Frederick was in the succession of the rulers of Burgundy, that great province of which the King of France was nominally the overlord. The less important island Kingdom of Sardinia was his also, and by his marriage he gained the Kingdom of Jerusalem, as it was still called, though it meant only the strip of western coast of Syria and Palestine which the Turk had left to the Christian.

Probably Frederick II.'s power, extensive as it was, was quite unwieldy. Probably his authority over parts of this great extent would not have been very readily obeyed, nor very easily enforced. However that be, he really, as I have said, effected nothing against the Lombard League, which was revived, in spite of the feuds between the cities. The League, as before, had the power of the Pope on its side.

One of the means by which the Pope defeated the Emperor in this struggle, and it was perhaps his strongest weapon, was by excommunicating him. Frederick had engaged to go on Crusade, the fifth Crusade, but ill-health had prevented his taking an active part in it, and the Pope gave this as the reason of his excommunication. Excommunication meant that he was denied all part in the services and sacraments of the Church in this life, and was told that his soul

would be lost in the world to come. It released his subjects from any necessity of obeying his commands. It put him, moreover, much in the position of an "outlawed" man, which meant that he was not under the protection of the laws of the land, so that any man could be held blameless who lifted a hand to attack him. It was a terrible power, and it was used very terribly by the Church at this time and for many centuries afterwards.

And then this Frederick, this man excommunicated by the Church, undertook the direction of the sixth Crusade. It was an extraordinary position. A Crusade was a war for the Cross, for the Church; and here was one who had been placed quite outside the fold of the Church taking the leadership in this war. But the truth is that these later Crusades were not really aimed against the infidel and the Moslem for religious reasons nearly so much as for political motives. Frederick actually did persuade, without fighting, the Turkish Sultan of Egypt to give him the sovereignty of Jerusalem.

While he thus brought back the Holy Places into the Christian Church, what he claimed to be his own territories in Europe were being invaded by the Pope's forces—a kind of "Crusade" was waged against him who was leading a most successful Crusade in the recognised sense of the term!

He returned to Europe to struggle awhile against the spiritual power; but it was too strong for him. He died in 1250. For another score or so of years Pope and Emperor, Italy and Germany, fought intermittently, with such weapons as each had, but before the beginning of the fourteenth century the Church's spiritual ascendancy prevailed over all the Western world, and Rome had been established in her papal possessions.

During much of that fourteenth century, however,

conditions in Rome became so disturbed that the Popes removed to Avignon in France. They removed thither in 1305 and four years later we find the Emperor acknowledged as King of the Romans. It was not for another seventy years that a Pope dared or cared to live in Rome, and even when the Papal Court did return there were for many years two Popes, one, appointed by the Italian cardinals, in Rome, another, elected by the French, in Avignon.

Yet even in the midst of these distractions and schisms, when the actual life of the Head of the Church was sometimes in danger, we still see the Church's power steadily increasing—for one reason, because, in the tumult of the times, it was the one force which knew its own purpose and pursued that purpose in all places and at all times unchangeably. By the end of the fourteenth century it stands at last supreme in its own city and country—in Rome itself. Rome as a republic exists no longer: it has become the Papal State.

CHAPTER XIX

THE MOSLEMS IN SPAIN

It is curious to note the different modes of government which prevailed in the different States of Italy in the fifteenth century. There was, nearly halfway down the long peninsula, this Papal State or State of the Church, firmly established by 1450. In the extreme south was the kingdom, that is to say a State governed by a monarchy, of Naples, with which the island of Sicily was at one time included, while at another time the kingdom was separated from it. In the extreme north there was Milan, of which the Duke was the head. Another of the five great States by which all Italy at that time was held was Florence, under a republican government, and there was the powerful naval State of Venice, also in name a republic, though its mode of government differed from the mode of Florence. In Italy more than in any other country, although conditions everywhere were constantly changing, we find what we may call experiments in ways of government being attempted. I do not think that there is any form of government, or even of anarchy—which is absence of all government—under which mankind ever has tried to live that was not put upon its trial in Italy during these years. Yet, through all the shifting scene, so unsettled that even the Pope himself had to fly from the Holy City, the power of the Church still increased and increased. And one of the means of its

increase we have to recognise in the Crusades. Although the later Crusades lost much of the high spiritual motives which had inspired the first Crusades, even the worst of them was waged with the underlying idea in the minds of the warriors that they were fighting in the sacred cause of religion.

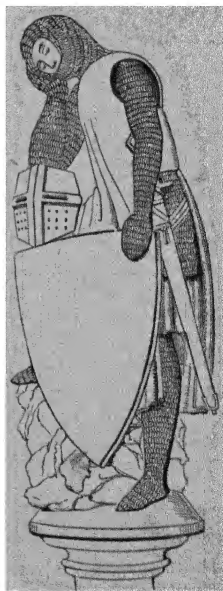
The earlier Crusades had been fired with the project, which for a while had been achieved, of rescuing the Holy Places of Palestine from the infidel. The first Crusaders of all had been invited thither by the Emperor at Constantinople. The fourth Crusaders had attacked and taken Constantinople itself and had put one of their leaders, Baldwin, the Norman, on the imperial throne. But there were other so-called Crusades that never went eastward at all. Only a few years later than the date, 1204, of the expedition which captured the imperial capital of the East, that so-called Crusade against the Albigenses swept over the beautiful country of the troubadours. The people of this part of France had been disposed, for many years, to adopt a view of the nature of God which had been brought from the east of Europe and was opposed to the doctrine of the Church of Rome. Moreover, these heretics, as the Church deemed them, set their faces firmly against some of the evil practices of the clergy.

It is not only in the south of France, but it is in whatever part of Christendom we look at this time, that we find these evil practices. Doubtless there were very many good and zealous priests and monks, but the records leave no doubt that there were very many who were idle, and worse than idle. From the Pope himself came parchments on which were written pardons for sins committed, and these pardons could be bought, for money, from the clergy. Also there were other parchments on which were written "indulgences," as they were called—that is to say leave to

commit sins, up to a certain date, without penalty. These too were sold, for the benefit of the clergy and the Church.

It was against such bad doings as these that the Albigensian heretics protested, and probably it was this protesting, quite as much as their heretical belief, which led the Church to incite an active war against them. They were under the protection of the lords of the castles in which, as we have seen, the troubadours were welcomed and entertained, for these lords themselves appear to have been inclined to their doctrine. One of these lords was excommunicated by the Pope's legate who had been sent to try to suppress the heresy. In the uproar which this caused the legate was killed, and the result of his murder was that the Pope incited the lords of the north of France to take up arms against the south and sweep the Albigensian heretics off the face of the earth.

It was a sweeping which was not perfectly accomplished at the first passage of the broom. The heresy continued to linger on in secret places until the Church, by the use of that most cruel institution called the Inquisition, finally destroyed it. But it was an immediate result of the Crusade that the independence of the lords of the south of France was lost. Their demesnes were gathered in under the sovereignty of



STATUE OF KNIGHT IN
CHAIN ARMOUR.

the King of France, and all that graceful and picturesque and highly cultivated life in which the troubadours had taken so very large a part came to an end. Their music was silenced : their poems were composed no more.

You may read in your history books that the "era of the Crusades" comes to an end in 1270. You will also find the Crusades divided up into first, second, third, and so on. But, as we have seen, there was a continual going to and from Palestine. There was, too, one European country in which we may say that a perpetual Crusade, or war for the Cross against the Crescent, went on without ceasing for close on 800 years. That country is Spain, from its first invasion by the Moslems, which was early in the eighth century, until their final expulsion at the end of the fifteenth.

The Mahommedans, you may remember, even pressed on over the Pyrenees, those mountains dividing France from Spain, after they had helped in breaking up the kingdom of the Visigoths in Spain itself ; but they were defeated and driven back as soon as they came up against a strong opposition. They were able to overrun Spain just because there was no strong opposition there. But these Moslems themselves did not form any durable government in Spain. They had none of the ability for governing and organising that the Romans had shown. They had no sooner swept over the Spanish peninsula, as they did, than a Christian kingdom independent of them was proclaimed in that region of Spain which you may still see marked on the map as Asturias. But it extended much beyond the bounds of the present province so-called, reaching from the Pyrenees away to the western extremity of the peninsula.

The story of Spain all this while was cut off and separated from the whole great story and did not enter

intimately into its making, rather as that peninsula itself is cut off from the rest by the Pyrenees. It is a story, however, which we cannot afford to neglect because there came a time, a little later, that is to say in the sixteenth century, when Spain was very masterful all over the world and played the leading rôle in the story. But during all these eight centuries of her crusade with the Moslem she took but little part.

We have observed that the Pyrenees, beside being a formidable obstacle and boundary in themselves, were the home of a very independent and unconquered people called the Basques. They are there still, still a people rather apart. Probably they are survivors of one or the other of those early Celtic invasions which swept over Europe and of which there survive also remnants in Brittany and in Wales. They still speak a language unrelated to that of the French on the one side or the Spanish on the other.

And what was the story of this Spanish peninsula, thus separated from the rest? We have in the first place to try to understand what the "Moorish conquest," as it is called, meant. It is said that the Moors "swept over" the country. It is a good phrase to express what happened if we take it in the right sense. They "swept over" the country, but that does not at all imply that they swept all the former inhabitants, who probably were chiefly of the Visigothic race, before them. Spain is a country of many mountain ranges. To bear that fact in mind will help us to understand what happened.

These mountain ranges provided refuges into which the inhabitants could resort in time of invasion, and whence they could come forth again and take up their lives much as before when the sweeping of the invasion had passed over. Spain was far too large a country for the Moslems who came in to settle and to govern, and it was too much cut up by the mountains. The

invaders had not any very settled government or organisation among themselves. They were a mixed company of soldiers, Arabs, Syrians, and Africans. They had no settled purpose in their invasion. They seem not to have known what to do with it when they had achieved it.

They achieved it easily, because there was no real resistance, as we have seen, until they crossed into France. But though the Christians of Spain could not combine to resist them, the Christians had some settled interests in common, to hold them together. They had the Church, and they had the combination of their own Gothic laws with the Roman law which they found in Spain when they came there. They had, therefore, some influences to bring them together into that unity which gives strength, and as their numbers grew they became powerful.

We should bear in mind that they had not long been converted to Christianity when the Moslems came upon them. The religion of Christ had no very strong hold over them. The consequence was that, when they found that their conquerors would let them live far more comfortably in the country if they adopted the religion of Mahomet, there were many who were quite willing to do so. The conquerors do not seem to have used their power cruelly, and it is likely that the people in general were in quite as good a position and quite as happy under the new rule as under the old. The Jews, particularly, of which nation there were very many in Spain, were almost certainly happier, for the Christian government had persecuted and oppressed them and the Moslems were far more tolerant. The Moslems, indeed, whether in Spain or Asia, or even in Africa, were probably quite as advanced in general culture as the Christians. Europe was indebted to them for a better knowledge of medicine than the Western world had acquired before. The game of chess was given us

by them, and when we say "check-mate" we are really saying "Sheik mat" = the sheik, or king, is dead.

By the tenth century the Christian power from the north was beginning to press heavily upon the Mahommedans in the south, and this pressure southward led to the foundation of the Kingdom of Castile, in the centre of Spain. Another kingdom which had been independent, that of Leon, was absorbed by Castile. This name of Castile is said to be derived from *castillas*, or castles, because the Christians, as they spread southwards, made forts or castles, as they went, which they held as outposts against the Mahommedans. All through the next, the eleventh century, in the course of which William the Conqueror came to Britain, the war between Christian and Moslem went on, a continual Crusade, in Spain. We may notice that twice, when the Moslems were hard pressed, they summoned others of their own creed in Africa to come to their assistance. On each occasion of the coming of these new forces the Christians were forced back.

But the energy and the organisation which made the strength of these counter-attacks seem to have spent themselves quickly. Always there was more unity among the Christians and a more steady purpose. They came on again to the attack and found the Moslem force less able to resist.

A very important gain for the Christians was the taking of Cordova by Ferdinand III., King of Castile and Leon, in 1236. Cordova was the chief city of Mahommedan Spain. There was a Caliph, or head of the Moslem Church, at Cordova, independent of the Caliph at Mecca. It is rather like the position of the Pope at Rome and the Patriarch at Constantinople in the Christian Church at that time.

The effect of this capture of Cordova was decisive. Not many years later another important and strong city of the Mahommedans, Seville, was also taken from



SEVILLE.
The Giralda.

them, and it is a remarkable fact in this capture of Seville that the Christians had the assistance of ships belonging to the Moorish King of Granada. The King of Granada had done homage to Ferdinand for his kingdom. Even before the middle of the previous century Alphonso VII. had been crowned as "Emperor in Spain and King of the Men of the Two Religions."

It is a singular title. There is not the slightest doubt that it claimed a great deal more than the possessor of the title could enforce, but still it shows the direction in which events even then were moving. They had gone very far when a king of Castile could have the only remaining Moslem potentate in the land as his vassal, and could have the help of his Moslem ships in the assault on a Moslem city.

But still Spain was far from a united kingdom. Portugal was independent and has retained that independence ever since. There was the small independent Kingdom of Navarre, up against the Pyrenees, and in the south-east, with a long stretch of sea-coast on the Mediterranean, was Aragon, also an independent kingdom.

Aragon entered more into the course of the great story than any other of the kingdoms in Spain before 1500 ; because her kings had some claim to the throne of Naples and Sicily ; but it was no very large part in the story that even Aragon played.

Our England came near to being drawn into the story of Spain herself, or rather, of Castile—I say rather of Castile, because the name of Spain, to include the whole country which we now so call, was hardly in use then. This happened because John of Gaunt, who was son of our King Edward III., had married, as his second wife, a daughter of Pedro the Cruel, as he was styled, the King of Castile. Pedro, for his cruelties, had been hunted off the throne by his own brother,

and our Edward the Black Prince, eldest brother of John of Gaunt, went down from France into Castile and helped to put Pedro back.

John of Gaunt's claim was settled by the marriage of the son of John I., who had succeeded Pedro on the throne of Castile, to John of Gaunt's daughter. We may think that England was fortunate in thus escaping all the complications in which this claim might have involved her.

And now—to conclude the story of Spain, up to the year 1500 or so, and the story of that long drawn-out crusade of eight centuries of which she was the scene—it is remarkable that although the Moslems' power had been restricted to the Kingdom of Granada as early as the middle of the thirteenth century, it was not until nearly the close of the fifteenth that their dominion in Spain was brought to an end by the capture of Granada itself. And by this time the Christian power in the country had been strengthened by the union of the Kingdom of Aragon with that of Castile. This was brought about by the marriage of Ferdinand, King of Aragon with Isabella, Queen of Castile. Thus, with Granada now included in Christian Spain, we have the boundaries of the country as they are to-day, except for a small part of the little Kingdom of Navarre which lay south of the Pyrenees. That final portion also will be annexed before many years of the new century have gone.

And now Columbus is just coming back with the news of America. Spain is about to enter on her conquests in the New World. A new day is dawning.

CHAPTER XX

THE PLANTAGENETS IN FRANCE AND ENGLAND

IF the kings of England after John had been content to acquiesce in his giving up of practically all that were of value of his possessions on the Continent, it is likely that they would have saved much fighting and misery, both for the people of England and of the Continent also.

It was not to be thought for a moment that they would so acquiesce, however. It took the almost continual fighting of some 300 years to effect that useful separation of England from the rest of Europe.

To understand the story we have to bear in mind that the character and will of the king in those days were all-important for the country. He could practically dictate what was to be done. He could declare war and make peace.

And yet, remember this, even a king could not make war without money, to pay and feed his troops and to get munitions of war and horses and so on. The kings of England often found themselves in want of money for their wars. They tried once or twice to impose, of their own authority, a tax—over and above the taxes which had grown out of ancient usage and were recognised as the king's right—to pay these expenses, but the people and the barons always proved too strong for the king when he attempted these exactions. If they did not actually force him to give up the new tax, they at least compelled him to accord them some further liberties and privileges in return for their consenting to pay the extra contribution demanded of them. It was largely in this way,

because of the necessity for money in which the king found himself, that the "rights of the people," as we call them, were conceded.

So it is possible to argue that out of the evils and miseries of the wars this good did come, and that it might not have come but for these evils and miseries, because it was through them, or through the wars that caused them, that the needs of the king became so pressing.

Henry III., succeeding the wretched John, gave his subjects further offence, besides that of the money which he made them subscribe for his wars, by the number of foreign counsellors and officials that he had about him. And the effect of this again was perhaps not altogether evil, for it helped the English people to a stronger idea that they were one nation—to a stronger idea of their national unity, as we say. While the kings were trying to be both English kings and French kings, the people grew more and more purely English.

Because of Henry III.'s money difficulties, he had often to summon that Great Council which had grown out of the Anglo-Saxon "witanagemote" or "meeting of the wise men" of the nation. It began to be written of by its present name of "parliament," and exercised, as we have seen, one of the most important powers of parliament, namely, allowing the king to collect money from the people. And this very phrase, that it seems natural and right to use, "allowing the king," shows how the power of the king was already limited. It was very different in France; and it was largely because the French people had not been able to put any such check on their king's power that the horrors of the French Revolution had to happen. The English counties sent up representatives, chosen by themselves, to the Councils or Parliaments; and so government by the representatives of the people began.

Charters for free trading and immunity from

certain taxes were granted by the king at these Councils, but he broke his word as readily as he gave it, and his barons soon came to open war against him. The barons had the better of the fighting. Twice they defeated him and extorted promises from him as a condition of letting him continue on the throne at all, but the last and deciding battle at Lewes, went in the king's favour. By that time he was perhaps softened by age. His terms were not severe and the last years of his long reign were the best.

When he died in 1272 his son Edward, his heir, was on Crusade, and it was not until two years later that he returned. That no claimant to the throne came forward in that interval seems to show that the idea of hereditary succession to the throne was at length fully recognised.

It looks as if Edward had learnt wisdom from his father's folly. He did not attempt expensive foreign adventures, except as he was compelled to them by his difficulties with his feudal lords in Aquitaine and Gascony. He had the King of France as his own feudal overlord in respect of those lands. But he did undertake, and successfully, an enterprise against a foe nearer home—Wales, whose prince refused him the homage due. He conquered Wales and, although it rebelled against him about ten years after, and again against a later king, he really had conquered it once for all. From that time forward the eldest son of the King of England has had the title of Prince of Wales.

He was not nearly so fortunate in his attempt to settle the affairs of Scotland. He was called in as an umpire over the question of who was the rightful heir to the Scottish throne, and trouble quickly arose because he claimed that he had given this decision as the overlord of Scotland, whereas the Scottish view was that he had merely been invited, as an independent party, to arbitrate in a case of difficulty.

Hence came war, and repeated war, with Scotland—repeated, because after more than one conquering invasion Scotland appeared to be defeated, and at the conqueror's mercy, but always its spirit revived, first under the leadership of William Wallace, then under that of Robert Bruce; and Bruce was the effective ruler of Scotland when Edward I. died, in 1307. Seven years later, in Edward II.'s reign in England, Bruce won the decisive battle of Bannockburn, which made Scotland secure in her independence during all the years of Bruce's life, and left her a constant menace to England until the happy union of the nations was accomplished by the succession of the Scottish king—James, the first Stuart King of England—to the English throne. But that was not for many a long year beyond the date that this book tells of.

Of the three Edwards who succeeded each other at this time as kings of England, the first was the best and most statesmanlike, the second the least worth, and the third, bold and chivalrous, committed many of the sins of the father of Edward I. and wasted the country's strength and resources in foreign war. In his reign began that of which history speaks of as the Hundred Years' War: and indeed it lasted for more than a hundred years, seeing that it had its commencement before the middle of the fourteenth century and did not end until just after the middle of the fifteenth. That long-drawn-out war was of course with France, and France had Scotland ever ready to help with a stab from the north of England when England was in trouble.

The war was almost forced upon the kings of the unfortunate countries, France and England, by the circumstance that the English king was the lawful feudal holder, under the King of France, of Aquitaine and the Gironde in the south of France. It was a possession far from the English centre, and immediately attached to France. Geographically it was a part of France.

Therefore, in defence of these and other claims to territory on the Continent, England was practically obliged to fight, seeing that France was scarcely less obliged, for her own safety and settlement, to endeavour to win this territory to herself. The long war was fought with very varying success, and not without intervals of peace. The feudal lords of the disputed districts were willing to play off one king against the other, proclaiming themselves now under allegiance to the one and now to the other, as they found it to their best advantage.

Edward began by winning a great naval victory, which made his fleet unquestioned mistress of the sea for twenty years or more, and at the end of the first ten years of the war, from 1337–1347, all the gains seemed to be with him. He made a truce with the French king, after winning a great victory at Crécy, after capturing Calais, and after his armies had been no less victorious in the south. We can never know how matters might have gone, when the time of that truce ended, had not an awful calamity, far worse than war, fallen upon England and upon all the Western world. It was that calamity known by the dreadfully suitable name of the Black Death.

It seems to have been the same disease^{as} that which is now called the plague, and it was so terribly deadly that actually one-third of the population in England is said to have died from it, and the loss of life on the Continent was no less. Most countries had far fewer inhabitants then than they have now, and they could less afford the loss. The result, in England—and it must have been much the same elsewhere—was that much of the cultivated land went back to wild waste land, for want of workers to keep it tilled. This lack of labourers led to a general change in the system on which agriculture was carried on. It led to the system that is still in use.

According to the old way, the workers were practically bound to stay and work on the manors. They were called villeins, and their condition was quite different from that of the serfs. The condition of serfdom itself was dying out. The villeins could not, at all events, be bought and sold, like chattels or cattle. They were protected by law. But they were obliged to give so many days' work, and do other services, to the lord of the manor on which they lived. They had to till the lord's land for him. The rest of their time they might employ in working for their own livelihood.

Under the new system, which came in by reason of the scarcity of labourers after the two years or so of the Black Death had passed over the land, the lords of the manors found it more to their advantage to let out part of their land—to "farm" it out—to tenant farmers, who paid partly in money and partly in produce, instead of by so many days and pieces of work. The farmers engaged labourers to whom they paid a wage, again part in money and part in kind, of which the amount was settled by Act of Parliament. The modern system, in fact, was established.

But another result of this terrible Black Death, which lasted till just after the middle of the fourteenth century, was that the truce between France and England was formally renewed. Troubles on the boundaries of France, however, both in the south and in the west, were constant. Edward, claiming to have a right through his mother to the throne of France, gave the French lords a ready pretext for declining feudal services which they did not wish to render to the king who occupied that throne.

Open war was renewed, and both in Normandy and in the south Edward triumphed. The Black Prince, as he was called, King Edward's eldest son, the Prince of Wales, conquered more than all that England claimed in and around the troubadours' *Langue d'oc*

and won the wonderful victory of Poitiers in which he took captive the French king. Again a truce, all in England's favour, was made. Once more war broke out, aroused as usual by the discontent of the French nobles; but this time it was discontent, on the part of those nobles of the south who had long been under the suzerainty of the French king, with the foreign rule of England.

We have mentioned two great battles won by the English, Crécy and Poitiers. They deserve a few words more, for they marked a big change in the military story.

The ideal of the formidable fighting engine during all the earlier years of those Middle Ages of which we are speaking now, was the knight, in armour clad. Up to the fourteenth century it was armour of mail, that is to say of rings of steel connected with each other and so forming a flexible covering, and yet able to keep out a moderate sword thrust or arrow shot. During the course of the fourteenth century the armour became more solid and weighty, with plates of metal instead of the mail. The horse, as well as the knight, was thus plated, and, so defended, neither could easily be hurt by the weapons then in use. Horse and man together were so heavy that they could bear down, in their charge, a great force of men on foot. Therefore they were so feared that a very small number of the heavy cavalry could put to flight, and to death, a very much larger number of infantry.

But this weight of armour made them very unwieldy. If they fell from their horses they could only regain the saddle with great difficulty. The Crusades, taking these heavy armed knights into the scorching sun of the East and nearly baking them alive within their armour plates, must have taught them some of the disadvantages of this weighty armour. But what taught the English, in the first place, that the heavy armed cavalry was not as

invincible as was commonly thought at that time, was the lesson learnt in their wars against Scotland. The Scots had adopted the plan of putting pikemen, with long pikes, in the forefront of their battle. The English heavy horse charged on these, but the pikes kept them back ; and, all the while, lightly armed archers on either flank poured in showers of arrows to the destruction of horse and man.

That was the manner in which the Scots several times had beaten the English. The English, taught by these reverses against the Scots, adopted just the same order of battle against the French at Crécy and also at Poitiers. And they had an astonishing success. In both battles the enemy was in far larger numbers, but the pikemen stood firm and held back the French cavalry, which charged again and again, and all the while the famous archers of England poured in arrows, from either side, with the long bow.

These battles meant more than victories of the English over the French. They were victories of the common soldier, the foot soldier, over the knight and the cavalry. They took away, at a blow, much of the awe with which the knight in armour had been regarded. Doubtless they added something to the self-respect of the foot soldier as they must have diminished something of the pride of the other. They led, too, to a lighter arming of the cavalry which made the horsemen quicker in movement and less clumsy.

Edward, after Poitiers and the capture of the French king, seemed to have brought his kingdom to the height of its power. The country increased in wealth, especially in the wealth which it derived from the wool trade with Flanders. The association of England with the Flemings was close, and many of that nation came over at this time and established a weaving industry in the towns of our eastern counties. But probably the great bulk of the wool that was

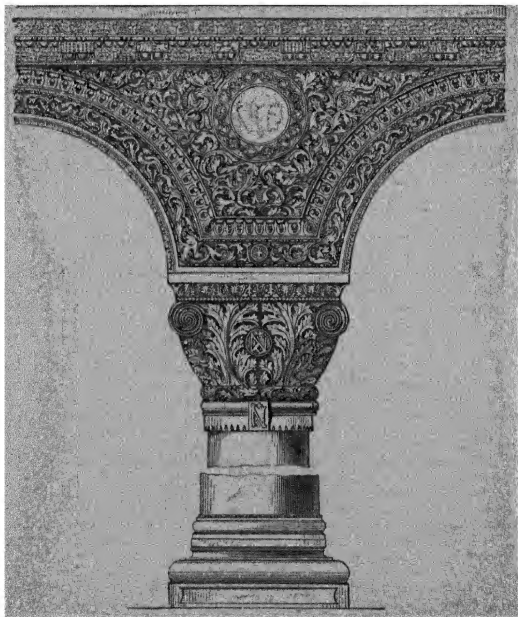
grown on the backs of English sheep was still taken to the Continent in the unworked state. We may picture to ourselves the long strings of pack-horses, led by carriers, going along the bridle-paths, as we might call them now, bearing the wool to the port whence it should be shipped across Channel. Wheeled vehicles were known and were in use, but it is tolerably certain that most of the carrying was on horseback, until a river was reached which was navigable by the small ships of that day. The roads were not adapted for carts—in spite of the old road-making of the Romans.

A considerable portion of the revenue of the Crown came from the "duties," that is to say the money due according to the arrangements of the law, that were paid to the king's officials by the merchants on the exported wool.

There had been Counts of Flanders ever since the tenth century, and the King of France was their overlord. When the King of England claimed to be King of France, the Count of Flanders, like other feudal vassals, was ready enough to take what advantage he could get from changing his allegiance from one master to the other. The industrial cities of Flanders, such as Ghent and Bruges, had secured great privileges for themselves. Like our own city of London, they had gained most of their privileges in return for sums of money given at one time or another to help their sovereigns in distress. The large degree of independence claimed by these cities, and the power which their wealth gave them, made the position of the rulers of Flanders constantly difficult. They were not independent States, like the Italian cities; but they had far more independence than our London.

England had become by this time a land possessing many beautiful buildings. Even the first of these three Plantagenet Edwards had been a great builder. It is one of the many curious facts about the story of

these Middle Ages, in which fighting was almost continual, that they were the date of the building of some of the most stately cathedrals and ecclesiastical buildings both in England and all over Europe. In Spain,



BYZANTINE STYLE OF ARCHITECTURE.

Capital and column from St. Sophia.

nearly from the time that the Moslems first came there, there was building showing much of the Byzantine style, as it was called, from Byzantium or Constantinople.

But the most beautiful and impressive buildings were in what is known as the Gothic style, which had

many varieties, but of which the striking feature is that the tops, the highest points, of the arches came to an angle, or peak, and were not rounded as was the style of the arch in the older buildings, called Norman, which were before them. Arch is from Latin *arcus*, a bow, and the Norman arch was of the rounded shape of a bow when the string is pulled back to discharge the arrow. The Gothic form of the arch is said to have been copied by its builders from the form which the corner poles of the primitive Gothic houses naturally took when they were brought together at the top to form the angle of the roof, as described on p. 100. This name of Gothic for this glorious architecture is a little confusing, first because we made the acquaintance of the Goths a long time before we read of the Normans, and yet what is called the Norman style of building is older than that which is called Gothic; and secondly because the very words Goth and Gothic are apt to suggest to our minds a very barbarous and uncultivated folk.

And so they were, when they came first into this story, from their homes east of the Rhine, but they acquired, by degrees, civilisation from the Roman world which they conquered, and this particular science and art of architecture was carried to great perfection at the date to which we have brought the story now. It is almost enough, to impress upon our minds the idea of that perfection, to remember that the building of Westminster Abbey, as we see it now, was undertaken in the reign of Henry III. in the thirteenth century, and that the beautifully decorated chapel of Henry VII. attached to it was added later, as the name of the king after whom it is called, indicates. There are some traces left of Norman and still older Saxon building in the cloisters, for the original building was a monastery, established in Saxon times, of Benedictine monks.

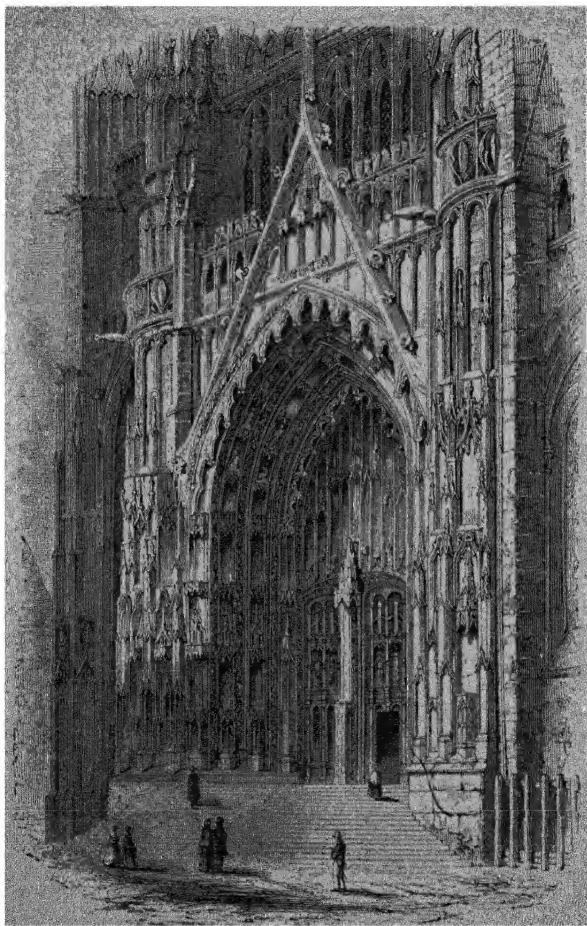
In the Poets' Corner, as it is called, of the Abbey is a tablet commemorating the poet Chaucer who lived, at one time, close to the Abbey. He died in 1400 and his stories of the pilgrims travelling to the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket in Canterbury Cathedral, where he was buried, tell us very much about the manner of life of the people of that day.

But, besides, Chaucer was a poet of the highest genius, and the beauties of his verse are marvellous considering the rough and troubled times in which he wrote. Most of the earlier writers had been clerics, and none approached the grace of Chaucer, a layman. But, what is perhaps more wonderful still, he had no followers, certainly none for more than a century after his death, who came near him in beauty of language or of thought.

Our story does not take us as far as that great Renaissance, or new birth of learning and culture, which distinguished the sixteenth century. We must put our Chaucer, together with Dante in Italy, and a few disciples such as Petrarch and his friend Boccaccio, as forerunners, a century or more ahead, of that great revival of literature.

By far the most of the Gothic building was of places for worship or for the accommodation of the clergy. Men thought—and it was a view which the Church was very ready to encourage—that they could find salvation and forgiveness for their sins if they devoted their wealth to the building of houses for religious purposes; and they also supposed that they could secure the favour of God by giving lands and property during their lifetime to the Church or by leaving it to the Church at their death.

By these gifts and legacies the Church grew more and more wealthy. But this generous gift to the Church did not altogether find favour with the kings or other feudal overlords of the givers, because every



GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE.
Doorway of Beauvais Cathedral.

such gift to the Church meant a diminution of the taxes payable to the lord. Such feudal taxes were those paid at a vassal's death, on the succession of a new heir—but the Church did not die ; or on marriage—but the Church did not marry. Lands of which the owners died without leaving an heir lapsed back to the Crown, which was looked on as having originally given the lands to the tenant on a feudal tenure, or tenancy—but the lands of the Church never thus lapsed.

In order to put a check on this, Edward I. found it easy to persuade his Parliament to pass an Act to prevent such giving of land to the Church unless leave were first obtained from the Crown. The Act was called the Statute of Mortmain, or of The Dead Hand, probably because land given to the Church passed into a hand that was dead so far as any giving of fees to a feudal lord was concerned. The Crown might, or it might not, grant the leave requested. The persuasion of the Parliament to pass the measure was easy, because most of the influential members of the Parliament suffered in the same way as the king. Their vassals, as well as his, might leave or give land to the Church, and so diminish their fees.

Thus king and barons stood together in this particular, against the Church, and all through our story we find a certain difference in this respect between England and the rest of Europe. In England we find that the king, the nobles, and the commons were generally ready to stand together to resist the power claimed by the Pope, representing the Church. They might, and they did, constantly fight amongst themselves, but on the whole they were very ready to unite on this one point, and to resist Rome. The great teacher and preacher Wycliffe gave the Crown all the assistance of his eloquence in denouncing the greed of the Church for civil power and great posses-

sions. Just as we look on Dante, the Italian, as a forerunner of the new birth in learning, so we may regard our Wycliffe as forerunner of the great Reformation in the Church. A great preacher in Bohemia, John Huss, preached the doctrines of Wycliffe and gained far more followers than he; and after Huss, Luther, the greatest of all the reformers, carried the work to its conclusion in the seventeenth century.

The Hussites of Bohemia became a large and formidable armed force. In our country it is likely that a revolt of the people of the eastern counties, led by Wat Tyler, was in some part inspired by the teachings of Wycliffe. Questioning the authority of the head of the Government would easily follow from questioning the authority of the head of the Church. But partly by a very gallant show of courage by the young king, Richard II., and partly by the valour of the citizens of London, under the Mayor, the rebels were overcome and crushed.

This spirit, however, in which Wycliffe and his followers, the Lollards, disputed the authority of the Pope, found favour with the Government for a short while only, and then the Lollards were hunted down and burnt as heretics. In Southern Germany, it inspired the Hussites a little later. But it made no way in France. We have to remember that at the very beginning of the fourteenth century the Pope fled from Rome and came to live, with his court, at Avignon, and this fact, that the Pope lived, and lived for many years, in a French city, had the effect of drawing the Pope and the King of France closely together. A further effect of this was that, all through the weary years of almost incessant war between France and England, the favour of the Church was with France rather than with England, and it was a favour which had much value.

CHAPTER XXI

ENGLAND, FRANCE, AND BURGUNDY

AFTER the Hundred Years' War had been in progress less than a quarter of a century, it seemed as if Edward III. had won all that he could possibly claim—peace and sovereignty over all the outlying parts of his dominion at home, and over more than he had set out to gain on the Continent. But the war was renewed by the action of Edward's vassal lords in France, only nine years later, and before his death, which happened in 1377, scarce a possession on the Continent was left to England except the city of Calais and a narrow strip of coast south of Bordeaux, in Guienne. Even at sea the French fleet, now aided by the Spanish since the interference by the Black Prince with the affairs of Spain—see p. 180—was completely victorious and made raids on the south coast of England. At the end of the fourteenth century it was on the terms that England should hold these fragments, and these only, of her once great territory on the Continent, that a treaty was made with France by Richard II., Edward's successor on the English throne.

The cost and miseries incurred in England by those unsuccessful wars in France led to serious riots against the Government. It was then that Wat Tyler led his force of Kentish rebels to London, where only the courage of the king, a boy of fourteen, and the resistance of the militia of the town saved the city from the mob.

Twice towards the end of the century Richard, now the French treaty was arranged, found time to visit Ireland and claim the homage of the chiefs of the Irish clans, and it was while he was in Ireland, on the second of these expeditions, that his enemy, Henry, Earl of Bolingbroke, whom he had banished, came back to England and was joined by great forces in the country which had by now become disgusted with Richard's tyranny. For though Richard had shown extraordinary courage and manly wisdom as a boy, his later acts raise a doubt whether he was quite sane. In the last year of the century, 1399, Henry came to the throne as Henry IV.

It was a troublous succession. There was discontent and active rebellion of both lords and commons in England itself. Wales rose in arms against the king and was followed by Scotland. France threatened to renew the war. Gradually the king gained the victory over each of these various forces opposed to him. Wales and Scotland were subdued by arms. Against Scotland he had the help of the great Earl of Northumberland and his son famous in story as "Hotspur." Very shortly afterwards the power of Northumberland was brought into opposition to the king, but was overthrown in that battle which settled the Welsh trouble and, as Shakespeare relates to us, gave Henry, the king's son—soon to be Henry V.—the chance of distinguishing himself by killing "Hotspur" in single combat, and thus proving that he was made for better things than to be the boon companion of the drunken old knight Falstaff.

But with his own commons Henry IV. was able to make terms only by giving up a serious piece of what had been the royal privilege before. He agreed that the taxes raised to meet the expenses of the war should be received and paid out again by a committee appointed by the Parliament, and no longer by an

official appointed by the king. The difference was of much importance for the liberties of the English subject.

As for the threat of war from France, that threat died away for the moment in consequence of an event which had a large effect on the course of the story during most of the fifteenth century. This event was the rise of the Duke of Burgundy to a power almost as great as that of the King of France himself, the Duke's feudal overlord.

Burgundy had for very many years been the name of a territory varying in extent, sometimes including portions of the present Italy and Switzerland, and always some of the most fertile and beautiful country in Europe. Towards the end of the fourteenth century it gained greatly in wealth and territory by uniting with itself the province of Flanders. This union came about through the marriage of the heiress of the Count of Flanders with a Duke of Burgundy. The province of Flanders included, as we have seen, semi-independent and wealthy cities such as Bruges and Ghent. Its addition to the dukedom of Burgundy made that chief vassal fully equal in possession of territory and resources with his overlord, the King of France. The story of the next many years in Europe is largely the story of the struggle between this great vassal and his lord. Possibly it was a struggle which saved our England, for England was very wearied and weakened by foreign war; she was full of discontent at home; her fleet had been beaten and broken up. If her old enemy of France had been able to attack her with any united force at this moment, it would have been hard for her to make head against it.

The threat of Burgundy gave the French king business to attend to nearer home. Unfortunately it also gave England an easy opportunity of vexing her ancient enemy by lending her aid to the Duke.

Henry V., the Prince Hal of Shakespeare's dramas, developed from a foolish prince into a wise king, but he was not wise enough to resist the temptation, given him by the rivalry between the French king and the powerful Duke, to regain what England once held on the Continent. He was wise enough, however, to conduct his campaign in a different manner from that in which former leaders of English armies in France had waged war. The Black Prince and others had marched, conquering and raiding, into the country, with very little apparent plan. Henry V.'s first enterprise was indeed rather of the same kind, and nearly ended in a disastrous failure. But he turned the threatened disaster into a resounding victory in the battle of Agincourt. The chivalry of France was caught up in marshy ground, and the archers of England shot them down. It was a repetition of Crécy and of Poitiers. The slaughter of Frenchmen of distinction and high birth was very great, and this wonderful victory made the English soldier a terror in France for years to come.

But the danger, from which only a wonderful victory could have rescued him, seems to have taught Henry a lesson. In his next campaign he set to work in a methodical way to conquer Normandy, making the country safe behind him as he progressed. It was a slower way than that of the Black Prince, but far more sure.

The French king was kept busy by Burgundy. He could send no help to his vassal of Normandy, and the whole of Normandy fell into Henry's hand. The Burgundians meantime had captured Paris; and now a desperate deed of treachery was done by the heir to the French throne. The actual King of France was insane, and incapable of taking any part in the government.

To break, as he thought, the Burgundian power,

the Dauphin, that is, the eldest son of the king, murdered the Duke of Burgundy even as the latter knelt before him to do homage. The Duke's purpose in doing this homage was to unite the forces of Burgundy and France against the growing power of Henry. After this desperate deed the Burgundians deemed it their best course to make terms with Henry, and the terms they made were that he should marry the daughter of the mad King of France and should be placed, with the help of Burgundy, on the French throne as soon as the mad king died—excluding the Dauphin from the succession.

They were terms which committed Henry to a constant war with the Dauphin's forces. In this he was consistently successful ; but the project formed by his treaty with the Burgundians was broken by his early death. Henry VI., his son and successor as King of England, was then two years old.

The English regent, who had charge of the kingdom while Henry VI. was under full age, carried on the war in France against the party of the Dauphin. And it was waged with steady success, so that the Dauphin, now come to the throne as Charles VII., was on the point of giving up all as lost, when the tide of England's victory was checked and then turned back by one of the most wonderful persons whom we meet in the whole course of the story—Joan of Arc.

This peasant girl, becoming prophetess, led the soldiers of France to victory and inspired them with the belief that heaven was on their side. From that moment the tide turned and all went in France's favour. The "Maid of Orleans," Joan herself, was captured by the Burgundians, sold to the English, and to our shame was burnt by the English as a heretic. But the French successes continued, none the less ; the Burgundians wavered and went over to the King of France again ; and precisely in the middle year of

the fifteenth century, 1450, the English lost Normandy and all their hold on Northern France.

Three years later that strip of Guienne, the coast line from Bordeaux southward, went the same way, and England was left with not a foot of French soil except the town of Calais.

And now it would seem as if England might at length hope to settle her own troubles within her island boundaries. If that was a hope which any men of that day entertained it was grievously disappointed, for she was just about to enter on those terrible years of civil war between the two great dukedoms of York and Lancaster, each claiming the throne, which went on during nearly all the latter half of the century. For their badge and emblem the Yorkists had a white rose and the Lancastrians a red, and from these roses those dreadful wars are known as the Wars of the Roses.

The English people had naturally been bitterly disappointed by the final result of the French war. England continued under the practical governance of the regents even after the king had come of age, and their rule caused great dissatisfaction. A dangerous mob under one Jack Cade got the better of the king's troops and held the city of London for two days. But his mob was undisciplined, and when the citizens took arms in their own defence the rebellion was soon put down. It was a sign, however, of the general discontent that the rebellion could have even such success as this.

What helped to make the Wars of the Roses so prolonged and so bitter was that the claim of each of the rivals was so nearly equal. In an outlined story, such as this that I am trying to tell, there is no place for the details of the claims of each ; but we may note that the claim as to the strict right of succession was complicated by the claim put forward by the York

party that they stood for the national welfare against the bad government of the Lancastrian king and his regents. The Lancastrians posed as pure loyalists, affirming that they stood for the legitimate rights of succession to the throne. Certainly the evils of their government were obvious to all men. They had lost France; England was without a fleet to protect her shores, and the French landed and raided; the oversea trade of England with the Continent was nearly ruined. Victory went now to one and now to another of the evenly balanced forces, and with each successive victory the vengeance taken by the victors, in retaliation for what their side had suffered when it was defeated, became more and more sanguinary. In one of the battles, that fought at Towton in 1461, which was a great Yorkist victory, the statement that more than 36,000 men were killed seems to be generally accepted, though it is scarcely credible when we consider the small population of England at this time. More than three-quarters of the loss was suffered by the Lancastrians. Moreover, of twelve of what are regarded as the great battles of these wars, it is notable that the Yorkists won nine and the Lancastrians only three; yet the final battle, that of Bosworth Field, the battle which "counted" above all the others, was won by the Lancastrians, and its result was to place Henry VII. on the throne. Bosworth and 1485 are usually named as the place and date of the last battle in the long drawn-out Wars of the Roses, but in fact the struggle was maintained till within three years of the end of the century, and the really last battle was fought, again to a Lancastrian victory, at Blackheath in 1497.

In the beginning of the wars the unfortunate Henry VI. was twice taken prisoner. King Edward IV. then comes to the throne. Henry is released, regains the throne and Edward flees abroad. He gets

the help of the Duke of Burgundy, and with a force of Burgundian soldiers returns, and dethrones Henry. We may note that these Burgundians were armed with what were called arquebuses, firing gunpowder, ignited by a match. The arquebuses were made somewhat after the pattern of the crossbow, but of course without the bow, and with a barrel in place of the open trough for the bolt. It was not the first time of the use of firearms in England, but there seem to have been more soldiers thus armed, in the battle which brought Edward to the throne again, than ever before.

These Wars of the Roses, though they were waged for long, and though the vengeance taken by the successive victors was heavy, seem to have interfered surprisingly little with the agriculture and not greatly with the commerce of the country. Although the victors' vengeance was dire, it was directed mainly against the chiefs of the conquered side. It did not fall on the rank and file. Population, in spite of the war, increased both in town and country, and in rural districts the tenant farmer more and more took the place of the villein. The result was that when Edward IV. had firmly established himself on the throne he found himself very largely free of that menace from the great barons which had been a check on the authority of the kings before him and had won privileges and charters from them. Many of the great men had been killed in battle or in the executions which followed a victory.

Therefore, had Edward so pleased, he might, as it seems, have been a king almost as autocratic as any of the Tudors who followed him after the brief reign of Richard III. Before the Tudor family succeeded the Plantagenets, more battles were to be fought and the nobility were still further to be weakened. But Edward was strong enough over them. He,

fortunately for England, cared for prosperity rather than for glory. He not only encouraged commerce, but was something of a merchant on his own account, owning trading vessels and making much money by the venture. The weaving trade, under him, extended in England and its great centre at Coventry was established.

He did indeed send an army to the Continent, to aid Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, who was his brother-in-law, against Louis XI. of France, but even this turned into a financial venture, for he allowed Louis to bribe him out and took his army home again.

And here we touch a point, in the relations between Burgundy and France, which is the point on which the final result of these relations turned. The result was that France, under Louis XI., gained a complete victory and that he became really sovereign over the land in which the sovereignty of the French kings had been disputed very long and very hardly. But the point on which the relations turned towards that result is indicated by the very title given to Charles of Burgundy, "the Bold," while the extraordinary character of the King of France is hinted by the means he employed to get rid of Edward and the English army. He made appeal to the chief desire of Edward's heart, the love of money. Louis is known in history as perhaps the master diplomat and schemer of all the many that its pages show us. He was a master in detecting and in playing upon the weaknesses of men's characters. So he played on Edward's avarice.

Against this cunning and scheming, for which the king had a genius, his great vassal had perhaps in excess that quality of boldness which his title implies. He was over-venturesome and hasty, and Louis waited and schemed, like a spider in the web's centre, and finally sucked the blood of the buzzing impetuous fly.

The claims of the first Tudor king to the throne of

England will be seen to be none too sound, if looked at critically. Largely it was Henry's own ability that enabled him to establish himself and to make a final end of the opposition and rebellions after he had been for twelve years king. It was an ability and strength of purpose characteristic of all his successors until the throne of England passed from the Tudors to the Scottish Stuarts. Yet always the despotism of the English kings differed from that of the French kings in this important point : that whereas the French kings had their foot on the necks of both barons and commons, in England even those who were most autocratic over their nobility always kept a wary eye on their commons, and not even Mary in her zeal for the Roman Catholic religion dared to go too far in opposition to the feeling of the country.

CHAPTER XXII

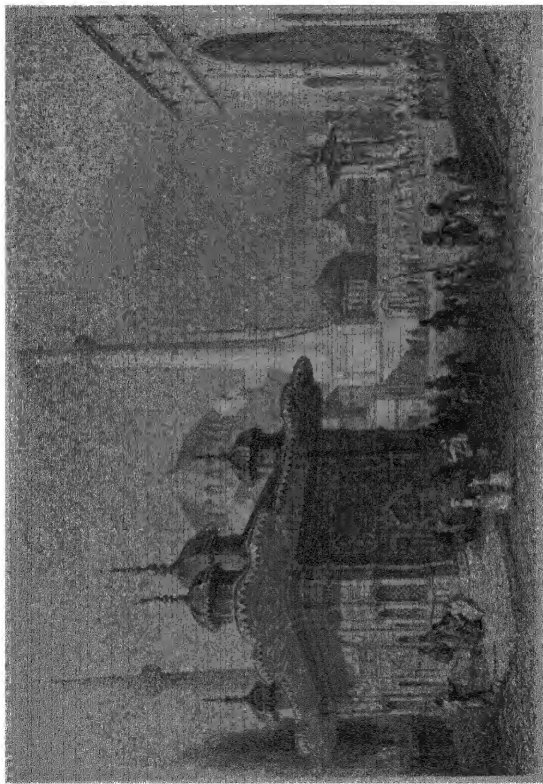
THE TEUTON AND THE SLAV

THUS we have traced in outline the course of the great story up to, or about, the year 1500, in respect of three of the nations which were among the foremost actors in it, England, France, and Spain. We have seen each of them establishing themselves within something very like the national boundaries which enclose them to-day. England and Scotland have not yet come into union, but the Tweed is in 1500, as now, the boundary river between them.

France, by the subtlety of Louis XI., has gained the mastery of all her great vassal lords. The English, it is true, still hold Calais, but no other possession on the Continent. And the boundary of France goes further north in 1500 than now, for it includes that count-ship, or province, of Flanders which had been brought into the possession of France's most powerful and dangerous vassal the Duke of Burgundy.

Northward, again, Holland and Scandinavia (the present Norway and Sweden)—with Denmark, sometimes the most powerful of them all—did not take much part as nations in the great story, but, as we have seen, the Northmen came very largely into its making by reason of their sea-faring raids and settlements upon the coasts of all the Western world. From Normandy they came to England and they conquered. They established themselves as kings of Sicily. A Northman, Baldwin, became Eastern Emperor at Constantinople.

Spain we have seen coming together, by the union of Castile and Aragon under Ferdinand and Isabella,



CONSTANTINOPLE.

Fountain and Square of St. Sophia.

within its present boundaries of sea and mountains. It has finally overthrown the last stronghold of Mahommedan power in the western part of Europe by the conquest of Granada. Portugal ever since the time of the second Crusade has kept its independence.

On the other, the eastern side of Europe, however, we find that another Mahommedan power, of quite different race from any of the Syrians, Arabians, and Africans who composed the mixed Moslem force which occupied Spain, has taken firm possession of Constantinople itself and of a vast area of Europe northward—the Turks.

Constantine had been an Emperor of wise foresight when he surrounded with strong defensive walls the fine city which he built beside the older Byzantium. It was the gate commanding the narrow sea-way separating Europe from Asia. Its harbour, later known as the Golden Horn, was spacious and secure for ships of commerce or ships of war. Its importance was obvious. Long before its capture by the Crusaders at the beginning of the thirteenth century it had seen the barbarians from the north hammering at its walls. Already the growing nation which had Moscow for its chief city, and which was beginning to be called Russia, had commenced its attempts—of which there have been very many in later story—to reach down to Constantinople.

Partly by fighting and partly by bribing, the Emperor of the East had succeeded in keeping the barbarians off, but the attack of the Crusaders, with the Venetian fleet to aid, prevailed as we have seen. Baldwin and his successors reigned at Constantinople for more than fifty years.

The effect of that capture of the capital of the East by the Western powers was curious. It led to the incursion into Greece, and into all that south-eastern

corner of Europe over which the Emperor at Constantinople was supposed to be sovereign, of many members of the most important families of the Western world, especially French and Burgundian. And so we have at this time as actors in our stories men with such titles as Duke of Thebes and Duke of Athens, but with names that are Gothic or Latin in origin.

This hold of the West on the East, however, lasted only a little more than half a century, and then the Greeks regained the capital city and again a Greek Emperor reigned. And gradually, after the loss of the Empire, the lords from the West lost much of their power in their own territories also.

So this was but a quickly passing act in the story. There was an attempt at union between the Greek and the Roman Churches during that half-century. The Pope of Rome was officially recognised as the superior of the Patriarch at Constantinople. But it does not seem that his authority made much difference to the doctrine which the bishops in the Eastern world professed, nor in their way of conducting their religious affairs. And after the temporary union the Churches fell apart again, as before.

Now we saw, in a former chapter of the story—Chapter XVI.—how the great mass of the Slavonic peoples, pressing from the east westward, had been divided by the Hungarians, of different race from themselves, thrusting in like a wedge. The wedge split them into two parts, of which the northern, consisting chiefly of Russia and Poland, was far larger than the southern. The principal Slavonic peoples in the southern part were the Bulgarians and Serbians settled in those territories, or nearly so, which Bulgaria occupies now and which Serbia did occupy until the Great War. The place of the latter we now see marked on our modern maps as forming part of the larger State of Jugo-Slavia.

We have said something already about the beginnings of that vast and "unfortunate country which is now called Russia. We saw how the name of the country and its first rulers came down from Scandinavia. The Scandinavians were great people, with unusual gifts of governing and organising at a time when these were very rare and precious gifts among the tribes and nations of Northern Europe. They must have had a touch of the genius which made the ancient Romans so masterful and effective.

The first capital of that infant Russia, which was destined to grow into such a giant, was Novgorod, not very far from where its later capital of Petrograd now stands. As with other famous cities in other lands, Novgorod was important because of its situation on a navigable waterway. Then from it again there stretched waterways to the south, both to the Caspian and to the Black Sea. The enterprising Scandinavians who went down to the Mediterranean and took possession of many coast towns and of islands in the Ionian Sea did not all go sea-roving round France and Spain and Italy to the eastward. The majority, I expect, did go by sea; but there is record of many going by the land (or river) route, through Russia. Soon the people that had occupied Novgorod and its neighbourhood spread eastward to another settlement called Nijni-Novgorod, which, as you may see on the map, is also on a great waterway. We may always find a reason for the growth of a big city, if we go a-hunting for the reason; and it is always an interesting hunt.

Another tribe or nation of these same Slavonic people began to grow in numbers and importance. They had their capital at Moscow.

During the first half of the thirteenth century these Slavs, whose pressure on his borders gave trouble to the German Emperor, were being pressed in their turn

by a people coming from farther east, from the very borders of China. They were a people from Mongolia, called Tartars, and they lived the hardy, nomadic life. They moved less like armies than like nations, taking all their belongings, their wives and children, with them. They were very numerous and very fierce. They came down upon these Slavs repeatedly, but it appears to have made but little difference whether they were victors or vanquished ; for if they won they did not settle on the conquered territory ; they went away again. And if they were defeated there was no permanence about their defeat ; they came back again. They were a constant vexation and menace.

So the story went, during all that half-century or so—at one time the Tartars overrunning nearly all Russia, as well as parts of Poland, except Novgorod itself. Later again they captured Novgorod. But by that time, that is to say just a little before the date at which the Greeks regained Constantinople—namely 1261—Moscow and the Muscovite province had increased in importance and strength. It seems that this capture by the Tartars of the capital of the southern province gave Moscow the opportunity to assert and make good a claim to authority over both provinces, for the Tsar or Czar (or Cæsar, or Kaiser) of Moscow entered into an alliance with the Khan (or chieftain) of the Tartar horde, and it is in this alliance that we may see the seed from which grew that immense Russia of to-day, which includes part of Mongolia itself, where those Tartar hordes came from.

The story of the next two centuries in Russia is really the story of the growth of the country from this seed. Other Slavonic peoples that grew powerful at the same time as, and in some rivalry with, Russia, were the Poles and Lithuanians. The latter were a fierce barbarous people. Probably they were a branch of the Slavonic family, but less civilised than the

others and a constant menace both to Poles and Russians.

Now you will perhaps remember that at the time of the second Crusade, that is in the middle of the twelfth century, a body of knights raised to go to Palestine requested the Pope's leave to go instead against a tribe called the Wends, who were pressing in upon Germany through the country that now is Prussia. The Wends were a pagan people and the Pope's leave was granted. This body of knights were called the Knights of the Sword, but they were absorbed later by the larger body called the Teutonic Order. This Order got possession of extensive territory along the south shore of the Baltic, and there the knights and their retainers maintained themselves—a Teutonic force lying between the Slavs and the ports on the Baltic. That was a position which was tolerably sure to lead to trouble. Several times in course of this great story we have seen a foreign army invited into a country and establishing itself there in a manner quite unexpected by the hosts. Actually it was on the invitation of one of the grandes of Poland that these Teutonic knights came to settle on their borders. They were established to the north of Poland, and on the eastern side they were bounded by the Lithuanians. And against these Lithuanians they would naturally fight, according to the purpose with which their order had been founded, because the Lithuanians were pagans until about halfway through the thirteenth century. At that time their ruler was converted to Christianity, and proclaimed Christianity as the State religion; and early in the next century they made an alliance with the Poles, their kinsmen. The Poles had been very hardly beset during the early part of the fourteenth century by those Teutonic guests who had come in on their invitation, but they heavily defeated the knights in 1332, and by their alliance with the

Lithuanians they became strong. The Teutonic Order had henceforth to stand on the defensive, trying, but in vain, to hold the lands that it had won.

In course of the fifteenth century, Russia grew in strength, by her alliance with the Tartars, and she too began to press upon the Teutonic knights. The knights were gallant fighters in these days of their adversity, and just after the end of the century they won a victory over the Tsar's forces which led to a fifty years' truce. But the terms of the truce did not give the victors any increase of territory. It did but confirm their position for a while, and for a while only, as masters of what they still held. If you look at a modern map it will show you no trace of these Teutonic knights and their possessions, once so extensive. Their story, which is part of the larger story of the long struggle between Teuton and Slav, ended in a complete victory for the Slav. Nearly at the date of this treaty between the knights and the Tsar, the great State of Lithuania was merged in the Kingdom of Poland. Together they became a great power, while Cracow, the Polish capital, and other towns favoured by their positions on navigable waterways grew rich and prosperous.

We saw, in Chapter XVI., that one of the German States, that of Austria (the eastern land), lay especially exposed to the pressure of the Slavs. Because it lay in that exposed position, it had need to be strong. And it was for the advantage of the whole German Empire further to its west that it should be thus strong, because only by its strength could it act as an effective defence against these eastern enemies. Therefore it was granted privileges. Its ruler was raised to the rank of Duke, and later to Archduke. The situation of its capital, Vienna, on that great waterway, the Danube River, brought wealth. All through the fourteenth century Austria was gradually adding to

her territory by conquest of weaker States along her borders.

It was in 1273 that Rudolph, Count of Habsburg, in the north of what now is Switzerland, became ruler of Austria; and the Habsburgs, or Hapsburgs, have been the ruling family in Austria ever since, until the Austrian Emperor's resignation on the loss of the Great War. Rudolph was also King of Germany. His claim to Austria was not very clear, but he was able to establish it because of the division of parties caused by the dying out of the direct descendants of the former ruling family.

It was for a like reason that Hungary, lying up against Austria's eastern border, and frequently at war with her, was able, after the middle of the fifteenth century, to annex some of Austria's most easterly possessions. But it was Austria's fortune at this crisis to have as her Archduke a bold and able man of the Habsburg line, Maximilian I., who was afterwards elected Emperor. Austria was by now an arch-duchy, but she was not yet an "electorate"; that is to say she had no vote, as those German States that were "electorates" had a vote, for the choice of an Emperor. For it was thus, by vote among those States that had the right of "election," that one was chosen to sit on the throne of Charlemagne. When you read of a ruler as an "Elector"—say of Hanover or of whatever State it be—you will know that it means that he was ruler of a State that had this right of election.

Maximilian then, later thus chosen Emperor, led and organised Austria with such success that by the end of the century, that is to say before the year 1500, he had regained all the territory that Hungary had lately taken, and restored to Austria all her old possessions. He had extended her boundaries to very much those which she continued to hold right up to the re-arrangement made after the Great War.

Thus this powerful family of Habsburgs established themselves in Austria, and at the same time established Austria as the most powerful State in Germany, although she did not have a vote in the Emperor's election. But the Habsburgs had possessions in other parts of Europe as well as in Austria. The castle from which their name was taken was near the junction of the Aar with the Rhine, in the north of that country which we now call Switzerland. It began to be so called about the middle of the fourteenth century, and the name was taken from one of its cantons, or divisions, the canton of Schwyz. But at first the name did not cover anything like the territory to which it soon was applied. In the fourteenth century it stood for a confederation of eight cantons.

The confederation grew out of an "Everlasting League," as it was called, which was formed shortly after the death of that Rudolph, the first Habsburg ruler of Austria, to resist the political claims of the Habsburgs. Apparently the founders of the League did not dispute the right of the Habsburgs as owners of extensive lands. The Habsburgs might deal with the land and any profits they might derive from it as they would. What the confederates disputed was their claim to govern.

Nearly all through the fourteenth century this claim was being disputed, sometimes diplomatically, and sometimes by active war. Twice the Habsburgs raised an army to go against these audacious rebels, as they deemed them. The story of William Tell shooting the apple on his son's head belongs to this period. We need not accept it as actual historical fact, but rather as a legend expressive of the patriotism of the Swiss cantons. The confederates were very few in numbers, but they had the courage common among mountaineers, and in their mountainous country they could defend themselves against a far larger force

of invaders. The numbers of the opposing armies that met in these conflicts were curiously unequal. In one great battle, that of Morgarten, early in the century, the attacking force is estimated at anything between 15,000 and 20,000, and the defending force at between 1,300 and 1,500. Yet the larger force, charging up the mountains and being beset with huge stones hurled at them by the defenders on the ridges, were utterly defeated. The same thing happened again towards the end of the century at the battle of Sempach. After that the Habsburgs made little further attempt to enforce their claims, but it was not till towards the end of the following century that the claim was formally renounced in a treaty called the "Everlasting Compact."

The Swiss seem to have been fond of that dangerous word, as applied to leagues and compacts, "everlasting."

In the course of the fifteenth century other cantons were taken into the confederacy.

In the contest between Louis XI. of France and his great vassal the Duke of Burgundy, the Swiss were brought into alliance with the French, the winning side, and they were consistently successful in a series of battles with the Burgundians. Maximilian, the Habsburg, was on the other, the Burgundian, side, for he had married the daughter of the Duke of Burgundy. Their alliance with the French added to the strength of the Swiss, and by the end of that century they had succeeded in throwing off any authority that the Emperor might still claim to wield over them, just as they had thrown off the claim of the Habsburgs at the end of the century before.

But the power of the Emperor was growing more and more nominal, and less and less real, and many States and cities were shaking off its burden. It was a time when authority both of Church and State was

in dispute. John Huss, a Bohemian preacher, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, had taken up, as we have seen on p. 195, the doctrines of our Wycliffe and preached eloquently against the evil practices which had come into the Church. He had a very large following. Just as had happened in England, the Hussite attack on the authority of the Church became associated with an attack on the civil authority too. But this latter attack was checked in England by the defeat of Wat Tyler's rebellion and by the cruel measures taken to put down the Lollards, who carried on the doctrines of Wycliffe. Huss was burnt, as a heretic, at Rome, whither he had been summoned to give an account of his doings, in spite of an assurance of safe-conduct made to him by the King of the Romans. This made Huss a martyr in the eyes of his followers, and his popular movement in Bohemia gained great force. A regular Hussite army was formed. The Bohemians were akin to the Slavs rather than the Teutons, and this revolutionary force became a menace not only in Bohemia itself but in other States of the Empire. When armies were sent against the Hussites, the latter, fired, like the Puritans later, with religious zeal, always had the advantage. But they do not seem to have tried to take possession of territory. They fought for what may be shortly called reformation in the Church. The great Reformation, under Luther's lead, was still to come, in the following century, but we may regard our own Wycliffe as its forerunner, with Huss as his disciple, preparing the way for Luther.

The Hussite revolution was set to rest by a compact, made in 1436, to which the Church of Rome itself was a party. Larger freedom in religious ceremonies, and relinquishment by the clergy of their worldly wealth, were the two principal points agreed in the compact. But the agreement was not very faithfully carried out.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE TURKS IN EUROPE

I HAVE now tried to tell you the story—up to the year 1500 and the beginning of that century which was to see the new birth of learning and the reformation in the Church—of the way in which most of the countries of Europe settled down nearly into the shape in which we see them now, or see them in maps made before the Great War. There remains one corner of the picture, the south-eastern corner, which we still have to look at ; and there we find that a people entirely strange to Europe entered into possession during the fifteenth century. That people were the Ottoman Turks who had succeeded to the rule of the Mahommedan world, which they had wrested from their own kinsmen the Seljuk Turks.

The story of this branch of the Turkish nation is the common story of a people coming West by reason of pressure of other tribes from the East. Mongols, from the borders of China, seem to have been the oppressors, from the East, of the Ottomans.

Before the middle of the thirteenth century they were settled near Angora, in what was then called the Kingdom of Rum. It was in the possession of the Seljuk Turks. But the Seljuk kingdom was breaking up. The Greeks of the Eastern Empire were attacking it heavily. The Ottomans, perhaps a hardier people than the Seljuks, because they had more lately been leading the nomadic, wandering life, supported their

kinsmen and hosts, and it ended in the Ottomans becoming the leaders of the Turks in Asia Minor. The Greeks were only a little more united and efficient than the Seljuks, and before the middle of the fourteenth century the Ottomans had the whole of Asia Minor in their hands.

Their fighting force was much increased by the formation of a standing army, called the Janissaries. They numbered some 12,000 at this time, though this number was more than quadrupled in later centuries. The force was chiefly composed of Christian captives. But these troops had such large privileges allowed them that there was no difficulty in filling their ranks.

And then happened that which we have seen occurring again and again in course of the story. Just as the Vandals were invited into Africa, just as the Moslems were invited into Spain, and just as both these guests stayed a great deal longer and made themselves much more at home than their hosts had expected, so now the Ottomans were invited into Europe to assist the Mayor of the Palace, as he was called, in Constantinople, who had seized the Government. This title of Mayor of the Palace, for the chief officer or prime minister, was taken from the Frankish court. The power of these Mayors of the Palace became, as we have seen, very great among the Franks, and the office often passed from father to son. The first of the Capets had been Mayor of the Palace to the last Carolingian.

The Ottomans accepted the invitation. They crossed into Europe. They established the usurper on the throne. They drove his enemies right up into the Balkans. And, for the time being, they returned to their own land. But they had learnt that this corner of Europe was a desirable territory and that it was undefended by any effective force. Bulgarians,

Serbians, Bosnians, and Albanians held the lands, or nearly those same lands, that you will see marked under their names on any map of Europe made before the Great War. By the end of the fourteenth century the Ottomans had overrun all these countries and had organised them under Turkish rule. They had taken Adrianople, the city of second importance in the Eastern Empire. They had spread terror westerly in Europe by a great victory won over a Christian army of twice the number of the Ottoman force at Kossovo, and again by a victory, in which many crusading knights were killed, at Nicopolis. At the very end of the century they were besieging Constantinople itself; but for a while the capital of the Empire was delivered from their hands. Partly by the stubborn courage of the besieged forces in the city, partly by bribery, and partly by a new danger appearing on the eastern border of their own kingdom in Asia, they were induced to raise the siege.

The new danger came, as ever, from the east. It was really Timur, or Tamerlane, with his Tartar hordes, who saved Constantinople, the capital city of Eastern Christendom, for another half-century from the Turks.

The Tartars came in irresistible numbers. They swept over nearly all Asia Minor and down into Egypt where the Caliph, the religious head of Mahomedanism, ruled. And then, as always before, they went back again. The ravaged countries were left to recover as best they could, and the Ottomans resumed their campaign in Europe.

Constantinople, again besieged in 1422, was again saved for a while by the appearance of a rival claimant to the Sultanship of Turkey. But the Turks pushed northwards into Hungary, where the Hungarians opposed them with a resolute resistance. Battles were fought with varying result, until, again on the fatal battlefield of Kossovo, the Moslem won another great

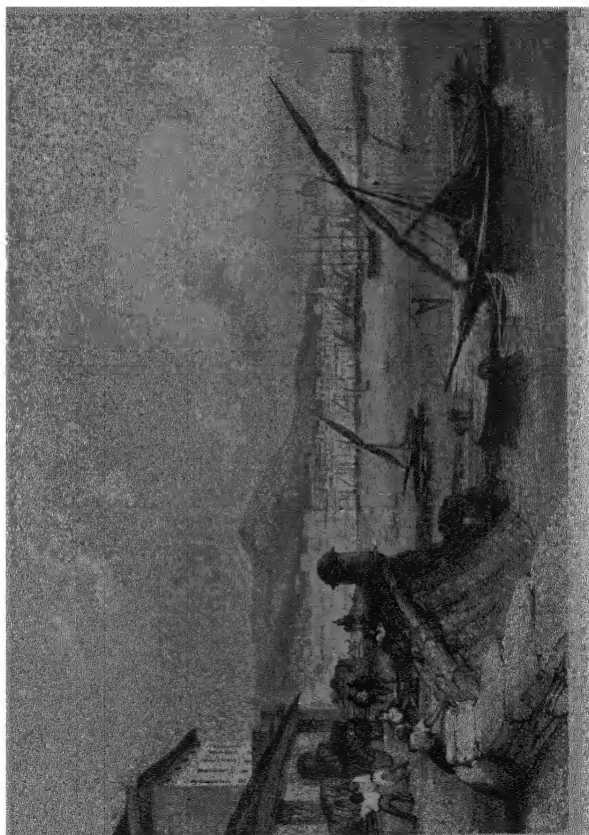
victory. The siege of Constantinople was recommenced with more vigour than ever. In 1453 the long-deferred end came. The city was taken by assault. The Christian Church of St. Sophia became the Moslem mosque.

There is little more to say, to complete the story of the Turks in this south-eastern corner of Europe. They did not rest content with their conquests, but were constantly pushing northward and westward. The Christian nations generally, but by no means always, united to oppose them. They fought their conquering way as far north as Poland, and for a while we find Poland in alliance with the Moslem power. Yet fighting broke out afresh, and a large portion of Poland was laid waste. Peace was again made between the two in the first year of the sixteenth century, and it was a peace that had some permanence, but it enlarged still further the bounds of the Turkish possessions.

In the midst of all this fighting by land in Europe, the Turks had found leisure to attend to naval matters and to the building and outfit of a large fleet. And with a fleet thus in constant readiness for action in the eastern waters of the Mediterranean Sea, there was one power, at least, with which it was certain to come into collision—the great naval power of Venice.

Ever since the fourth Crusade in which Constantinople had been taken, largely by the aid of the Venetian navy, Venice had held many of the islands in the Ægean Sea and had a hold on cities on the Levantine coast.

She was not the only Italian State, as we have seen, to be powerful at sea. There was Genoa, on the western side of the peninsula. We have also seen why the situation of Venice was the more favourable—because she looked eastward, and so was the gate by which the wealth of the East came into Western Europe.



It was largely by the help of the Genoese navy that the Greeks had retaken Constantinople, in 1261, from the Latins. Naval encounters between the fleets of these two rival Italian States were many during the next century and a half. Now one had the victory and now the other. But always the greater resources and wealth were on the side of Venice.

Nevertheless she was very hardly beset about the year 1380. Her main fleet had been beaten, the navy of Genoa held her blockaded by sea, and the enemy State of Padua prevented provisions coming to her by land. She was in imminent danger of starvation.

And then the Genoese fleet suffered just that disaster which the Athenian fleet had suffered in its blockade of Syracuse. The Venetians contrived to block the waterway which gave entrance and exit to the lagoon in which the blockading ships of the Genoese lay. They found themselves entrapped precisely as they had proposed to trap the Venetians, and finally had to surrender and hand over the greater part of their fleet. It was a disaster from which Genoa never recovered, and Venice was left mistress of the Mediterranean.

She was mistress, almost without dispute, until the Turkish navy was sufficiently strong to oppose her. The first war between them which went on for fifteen years from 1464, was indecisive, but it ended with Venice paying tribute to Turkey for her trading rights. Venice had no friends. She had been nearly starved out by Padua, lying just inland of her own territory; and lest this should happen to her again she had fought, and fought with success, to add to her mainland territory. Therefore she had not a neighbour with whom she was not on terms of enmity. All were jealous of her and all feared her.

Thus it happened that in the very last year of the fifteenth century, when war with Turkey broke out

again, we see the curious spectacle of the Pope himself, of the Emperor, and of the rulers of three other great states of Italy, Naples, Florence, and Milan, all, in some degree, favouring the Turkish and Moslem Sultan in his fight against the Italian and Christian ruler of Venice. Less than fifty years earlier, after the taking of Constantinople by the Turks, the Pope had imposed and endeavoured to collect a tax of one-tenth of the value of all benefices—or of all paid offices in the Church—in order to raise a force to evict the Turks. But now he had come to regard the Moslem Turk as a less dangerous enemy than the Venetian Christian.

In that final year, moreover, the Turks gained their first really crippling naval victory over the Venetians at Sapienza ; and for Venice it was the beginning of the end of her great power.

Thus at the opening of the sixteenth century we find the Turk established nearly as far in Europe as it was his destiny to plant himself. He had all that country of the Balkans which various races of the Slavs had held before him and which they again now hold, after him ; and he had parts of what before, and also later again, were Austria. Therefore of those Balkans and of those Austrian provinces, he was in no more than temporary possession.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE NEW DAWN

IN every part of the Western world we see the leading nations settling down at the beginning of the sixteenth century within boundaries nearly the same as those which define them at the beginning of the twentieth. And for the most part those boundaries remain, in spite of the upheaval caused by the Great War.

There is, however, one notable exception, namely Italy. The very idea of a united Italy does not seem to have been in men's minds until later. The country which we now know by that name was then, as we have seen, divided between five principal States, Milan, Venice, Florence, the Papal State, and Naples with Sicily.

Government in the rich and powerful cities was constantly changing hands. In Rome itself, where the situation was made more difficult and complicated than anywhere else, because of the Pope and his claim to governing power, the changes were bewildering. The power of the aristocracy was much broken in the middle of the fourteenth century when Rienzi, "Last of the Tribunes," led the democracy. Rienzi was the friend of Petrarch, and Bulwer Lytton has made him the hero of an exciting novel. But the Pope returned to Rome from Avignon in 1367, and though there were for a while rival Popes in Avignon and in Rome, yet by the end of the century the republican government of Rome had been overthrown and the Pope had gained supremacy.

He never really lost it. At one moment in the

fifteenth century the forces of the King of Naples took and sacked Rome itself. At another the Pope had to flee before his own barons. But he soon came back. One of his successors only saved himself from these same barons, or their descendants, by the aid of Naples. Nevertheless by the end of the century, which is the date of the end of the present story, the power of the nobles had received what really was its death blow. In Florence and in Rome their chiefs were simultaneously massacred. The Papal power was finally established.

Venice, as we have seen, was for a while by far the strongest and the most wealthy of the Italian States. But now the new naval power in the Mediterranean, the power of the Turks, was limiting and diminishing her strength, and shortly before the end of the fifteenth century two Portuguese navigators made a discovery of which the effect was to limit and diminish her wealth. If you will look at the map of the world you will see how far the Continent of Africa extends southwards, and you must understand that at the time about which our story is telling us now, no one knew how far southward this Continent stretched. Hitherto no navigator had come to its southern end. Many had gone sailing, sailing, south, but still that land was always there, on their left hand, on the eastern side, until these Portuguese navigators, Bartolomeo Diaz and Vasco da Gama, sailed yet further than any before them, came to the southern end of the great Continent, and found an open sea over which they might sail eastward. They had rounded what afterwards was named the Cape of Good Hope.

And what difference did that make to Venice? It made this difference—that whereas she had been the gate from the East, the port by which the riches and products of the East came into the Western world, this discovery that man could go sailing eastward, after rounding the Cape of Good Hope, meant

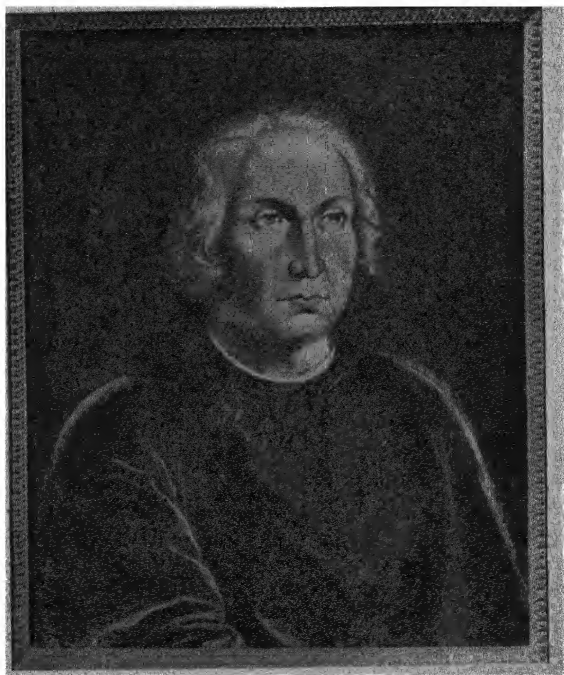
the opening of a new door through which those rich products could be brought to Western Europe. And it was a more convenient way of bringing them, because it did not require all the old long overland travel, perhaps from India through Asia Minor, and then the putting of the merchandise on shipboard to be carried to Venice, and then again the unshipping at Venice and the overland carriage again. This overland route was one way. Another was by way of ports on the Red Sea and thence across the Isthmus of Suez to the Mediterranean. Instead of all this complicated business, there might now be the one shipping in some port, say of India, and the unshipping, perhaps in Lisbon.

Thus the East was opened to the West, and almost at the same moment a new and further West was opened with the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus (after whom that great land is sometimes called Columbia) and by that Vespucci, whose baptismal name was Amerigo, after whom it is more commonly called.

Thus immensely, in two opposite directions, was the scene of the great story extended. And the discoveries to which men's minds were turned were not only those about the geography of the world they lived in, and the way in which its continents and its seas were shaped. Their minds began to turn with a new interest to art, to learning and to the beauty of the world.

All through this great story we have seen how wonderfully Rome, in spite of perpetual changes in her government and continual fighting between the various parties trying to get the upper hand, led the world, at one time dominating all by the organisation of her Empire, at another bending the spirits of men and directing their actions by the influence of the Church.

All over Italy, for many a century, the like contentions and changes in government were frequent, and it was in the very midst of the turbulence and of



COLUMBUS.

the fighting of city against city that Dante, greatest of Italian poets, and among the very greatest of all time, came into fame and wrote his "Divine Comedy." He was chief magistrate of Florence in 1300, born of

a family that favoured the Guelphs and married to a lady of a family very strongly disposed to the Ghibellines. So he had his full share in the troubles of the times.

Second only to him among the poets of Italy was Petrarch, his disciple. Petrarch is famous as the inventor of the "sonnet" form of verse. He was a student of the ancient classical literature of which the very existence seems to have been almost forgotten since the inroads of the Goths.

Boccaccio, author of the *Decameron*, a collection of prose stories which may perhaps be regarded as the foundations of the modern novel, was a contemporary and a friend of Petrarch. Our own poet Chaucer, born a quarter of a century later, was indebted to him for some of the stories which he told in verse form. Boccaccio, even more than Petrarch, was a lover of the classical literature of Greece, of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

In this revival of a love for the ancient literature, and in the works in verse and prose which these great artists created, we cannot trace that they were influenced by the troubadours and trouvères of more than a century earlier. They went back further, to the best models of antiquity. Therefore we have to regard these wonderful Italians as the true originators of that new interest in learning and in all the arts which received the name of the Renaissance, or new birth. For its full growth and development it had to wait until the dawn of the sixteenth century. By that time the art of printing had been invented. Learning in all its branches had received a great impetus at all the universities in every country in Europe. The first English printing press was set up by Caxton, who brought it from Flanders in 1476.

Though the new birth of literature was thus delayed, some of the greatest of the Italian painters

were hard at work during the fifteenth century. Cimabue, indeed, who may be said to have been the first of the real Italian painters, since all before him had followed the stiff Byzantine style, dates back to the latter half of the thirteenth. Ghirlandajo, his pupil, Michael Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Titian, the great Venetian painter, and many more of great fame, were at work before the fifteenth century closed.

Even in a story sketched in its most bare outlines, as is this, and told with as few names and as few dates as possible, it seemed necessary to mention some of these glorious artists and to realise that the end was at hand of those Middle Ages which have also been called Dark Ages, because of the dark ignorance and barbarity in which humanity at that time was plunged. Some of the goldsmith's and silversmith's work of the day was very finely executed, and many of the finest painters and sculptors themselves did not scorn to work at the jeweller's craft. But the real glory which lightens the general darkness of the Middle Ages, is the splendour of the architecture—the cathedrals and churches, the public buildings and the palaces of the great nobles. The richness of the church architecture in our own country we have shortly noticed already, and all over the world beautiful and noble structures were raised in those troubled ages when most of the arts were little studied. Generally the building is in one or other of the successive varieties of the Gothic style. In Spain we see many traces of the Eastern taste of the Moslems for towers and domes and “minarets,” as those slender towers with their balconies for prayer are called. Asiatic influence is found, though far less often, in some Italian buildings also.

Now we may do well to take a look round the world, the scene of this greatest of all stories, and see to what condition we have traced its progress at this point of time—say A.D. 1500 or a year or two before or after

that central date. We see, regarding it as a whole, that the nations have been engaged, after the break-up that followed the ruin of the Roman Empire, in framing their territories into something like the shape which we may find on the map now. And generally they have followed the same course, have gone through the same struggles and changes, in their way towards assuming that shape. For at first they split up into a number of small independent bodies, each under the rule of a lord. Nominally there was an overlord, but his sovereignty for a while was not very effective. It was but gradually that he made it real. Some of the nations differed from others in their local conditions. Thus Spain, rather cut off by the Pyrenees from the main story, had its own peculiar difficulties with the Moslems. The sovereignty of Italy, with its five principal States, was complicated by the claims of Pope and Emperor, of Guelph and Ghibelline and of the different city States asserting each its independence. But on the whole, what we are able to see is a tendency for the sovereign overlord gradually to make his power good over the lesser lords, and so to produce something like those national unities which we find now.

The position of Spain, to take that outlying part of the big story first, is that she has just succeeded in overthrowing the Moors in their last Spanish stronghold in Granada. She has almost completed national unity by the marriage of Isabella, the Queen of Castile, with Ferdinand, the King of Aragon. Then, with all her long sea-coast and the sea-going habits of its inhabitants, she will become for a while the greatest naval power in the world and play a leading part in the story. Portugal is independent of her and is opening up the trade with the East round the Cape of Good Hope.

Italy, as we have seen, is split into the five principal States, and has far to go yet before she can be one nation.

France has unified herself, and so has England, but we have to notice this difference between the conditions of the one and of the other, that in France the king has made himself despotic over his nobles and all his people.

England, no longer hampered by the possession of any territory on the Continent except the single city of Calais, which will be lost to her in the course of the century to follow, is more fortunate than France in that her nobles have won from the king a more liberal constitution, based upon Magna Carta. She will attain a freedom equal to that of France by less terrible means, though not without wars of Royalists and Puritans and the beheading of a king.

Scandinavian countries have for a time, as we have seen, been of the greatest importance in our story, pouring forth swarms of Northmen to make settlement and conquest in all quarters of the known world, but it has not been as nations, but rather in companies of sea-going raiders, that they have so wrought. For the moment those nations are not in the forefront of the world story.

Neither have the German States formed themselves as yet into any formidable nation. The power, always rather vague and ill-defined, of the Emperor has much decreased, and Switzerland and other States have shaken themselves free of it.

The Turk is pressing Austria and Hungary very hard. He holds, for a time, large provinces which had been Austria's, and which will be hers again, and, besides, he has established himself in that territory which is now the Balkan States and Greece, and is in possession of all that he now has of Asia Minor, with Egypt and the northern African coast in addition.

Poland, though she too has felt the Turkish pressure, has become a strong kingdom, and Russia, from her capital of Moscow, is growing in power after

combining with those Tartar tribes which at one time threatened to destroy her.

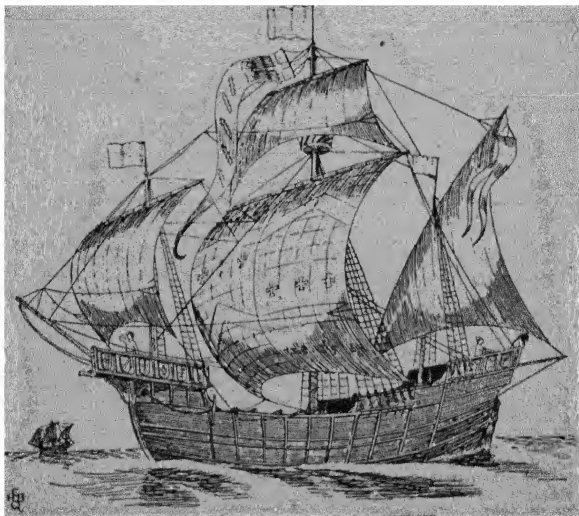
And in all the years of the story with which this volume deals, we see that there has been one force constantly working, through all the time and over all the scene except where the Moslem has prevailed—the force of the Church. It is a divided force, for Eastern Christendom looks to the Patriarch of the Greek Church as its head ; but the more important and powerful West looks to the Pope at Rome.

We have brought the story through some of the darkest times that mankind has known. Art and culture have nearly been destroyed under the barbarian invasions and the years of fighting. Now the Renaissance, the new birth of learning and of art, is at hand. Already we have seen hints of it and hopes of it, like flowers coming out in early spring, only to be nipped by late frost. There was that wonderful music of the troubadours of the *Langue d'oc* in the thirteenth century, with the ruder and less accomplished art of the *trouvères* in Northern France, of the *minnesingers* in Germany, and of the English minstrels.

But it is in Italy only that we can say that the Renaissance has arrived—in that land where the great painters have been at work, where Dante has sung his divine comedy, where Petrarch has written his sonnets, and where the despots of the cities have employed artists and architects to adorn the little States over which they tyrannised. Moreover, through nearly all Europe, and even in the gloom of the Dark Ages itself, there has been the most wonderful building of churches and cathedrals, of abbeys and ecclesiastical edifices, here and there of kings' palaces and of buildings for public use. Our England, too, has had her poets, of whom the chief is Chaucer rhyming his

"Canterbury Tales," his "Romaunt of the Rose," and other beautiful pieces.

But except in Italy, these early promises of art and of literature have not been followed up. They are only now, that we leave the story, on the very edge of larger fulfilment. The Dark Ages are dispelled. The



A SHIP OF THE TIME OF COLUMBUS.

(From *The History of Everyday Things* (Quennell), by permission of Messrs. B. T. Batsford, Ltd.)

dawn comes glimmering out of Italy, northwards. And the scene of the story is being expanded vastly. Columbus has touched America. Da Gama has circled the Cape of Good Hope. The world as known to Western men is about to spread itself to far more than double its former size. We have come to a new world-stage with new plays and new players.

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